

SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION, SEEDS OF SUCCESS:
THE SURVIVAL OR FAILURE OF VIOLENT EXTREMIST ORGANIZATIONS

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APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis meets master's-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

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DISCLAIMER

The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official position of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the connection between an extremist group's survival and its membership. This study analyzes three separate case studies to determine the validity of using a people oriented framework to target extremist groups, entitled the conversion process. Using the concepts of member recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization, the author tries to determine if the way an extremist group member is developed can lead to the overall survival or failure of the organization to which he or she belongs. To accomplish this task, the author applies the conversion process framework to two extremist organizations—*Aum Shinrikyo* and *al-Qaeda*.

First, the author uses Aum Shinrikyo to show that an organization built upon faith in an individual is susceptible to collapse should that individual fall for his elevated status. Next, the author examines the Islamic terror group *al-Qaeda*, choosing to separate the analysis into pre 9/11 and post 9/11 discussions. The pre 9/11 case study focuses on the early stages of *al-Qaeda*'s development to establish the group's foundations in a religious ideology, to contrast the individual focused ideology of Aum Shinrikyo. The post 9/11 discussion continues this idea, although the post 9/11 case recognizes the impact that global counterterrorism efforts have had on *al-Qaeda*'s command and control ability.

The results of this process show that people are, in fact, a key vulnerability of extremist organizations. Further, the manner in which an extremist group radicalizes its members plays a key role in determining the survival of the overall group. Unfortunately, the results of this thesis also recognize that extremist organizations built on religious ideologies are the most difficult to fight. Unlike groups based upon an individual's will, the polarizing character of religion makes it difficult to counter. United States and Coalition counterterrorism strategies must redirect the focus of effort from eliminating extremist leaders to reducing the pool of potential extremist members. Targeting the recruitment and indoctrination processes of extremist groups can support this shift in strategy. However, once radicalization begins, targeting the religious underpinnings of its foundations may only serve to finalize a member's radicalization.

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Introduction

The Resiliency of Terror

Prior to the events of 9/11, *terrorism* was most often associated in Western popular culture with wild-eyed action movie villains. This popular image, however, is at odds with the phenomenon of terrorism, which has existed since early history. For example, acts by extremists who could be considered terrorists stretch as far back as the Sicarii Zealots of the first century and ever since then groups have utilized terrorism to affect domestic and international politics.¹ From mass genocide to maritime piracy, terrorism has existed in many forms. The September 11, 2001 airborne terror attacks on the World Trade Center buildings and the Pentagon are examples of the latest form of terrorism. Shortly after the attacks, the US government declared a global war on terrorism. The result of these events, and others like them, has led to exhaustive amounts of research on different aspects of terrorism. While such research has informed responses to terrorism, the corresponding body of literature on the relationship between fundamentalism and extremism is rather thin.

This thesis argues that current approaches for combating terrorism do not adequately account for the factors that contribute to non-violent fundamentalist groups embracing violent extremism to advance their ideologies. In order to account for these factors, analysts must recognize that the survival of any group is rooted in the persistence

¹ Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Militants Kill* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), xxi, The Zealots-Sicarii, survived only twenty-five years, but profoundly influenced the Jewish history and religious beliefs. An article written in the Meridian online magazine by Daniel C. Peterson and William J. Hamblin asserts that some observers in the national media suggest that religious terrorism is a new phenomenon unique to Islam. This is simply not truth. The full article is available at <http://www.meridianmagazine.com/ideas/040607Sicarii.html>. Religion often played a crucial role in rebellions and wars throughout history; a classic example is the role of religion in the struggle of the Jews against Rome from A.D. 66-73, which culminated in the destruction of the Jewish Temple and the expulsion of the Jews from Judea. This, in many ways, laid the foundation for the Arab-Israeli struggle today. Although there were many political, social, and economic reasons for the Jewish rebellion, religion and apocalyptic expectations played an important role.

of its membership. For example, there are some similarities between fundamentalism and extremism. However, the differences between these beliefs make their comparison vital for any future counter-terrorism strategy in order to prevent more extremists from emerging. Fundamentalism is a precursor to extremism, but not all fundamentalists choose extreme measures either in order to convey their message or in response to their grievances. In addition, not all fundamentalist groups that choose the path of extremism survive the transition or the pressures brought on in response to their actions. Understanding the nuances of this paradox, through the experiences of a number of different extremist groups, is a goal of this thesis.

This thesis is *not* a discussion of how to win the war on terror. Even the architects of the Global War on Terrorism believe that the sheer magnitude of the task makes victory elusive or unobtainable.² For better or worse, terrorism is now a feature of international politics, as nations and sub-state actors struggle against internal and external competitors. While the potential for wars between states still exists, the appeal of such conflicts is less and less appealing for a variety of reasons. The evolution of expensive military technologies, and the complexity of modern combined arms operations, makes it difficult if not impossible for most second-tier countries, and all non-state actors, to participate. Because of this fact, both state and non-state actors groups consider terrorism as a primary means to achieve their goals.³ Those who conduct terrorism believe it will be successful primarily because of the effect that their actions will have on their target.⁴ Expert opinions on the exact mechanics involved in containing or stopping terrorism differ, but the common ground among all is the recognition that the problem begins with the primary perpetrators: terrorist leaders and their organizations. This thesis expands the discussion of the factors that most influence an organization's development from

² George W. Bush, You Cannot Show Weakness-interview, 2004, <http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/5866571>, the entire transcript reads, "I don't think you can win it. But I think you can create conditions so that those who use terror as a tool are less acceptable in parts of the world — let's put it that way."

³ The leader of Hezbollah, Sayyid Hassan Nasrullah, suggests that "martyrdom" attacks are the primary means of undermining the Oslo Accords. Nicholas Noe, ed., *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), p. 177.

⁴ Terrorist leaders often overestimate the effect their attacks have. For example, Qari Hussain Mehsud, the leader of the Pakistani Taliban, claimed that the failed terrorist car bombing of Times Square in New York City was a "jaw-breaking blow to Satan USA." Quoted in Bill Roggio, "Pakistani Taliban claim credit for failed NYC Times Square car bombing," *Long War Journal* (2 May 2010), available online at http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/05/pakistani_taliban_cl.php. (Accessed 13 May 2010).

fundamentalism to extremism, primarily through the lens of the methods used to recruit, indoctrinate, and radicalize individuals into its circle.

Important Definitions

Analyzing the impact of external contributors, as well as internal drivers, contributes to differences of opinion between which are the driving developmental force within terrorist groups. To avoid this pitfall it is necessary to first define the core terms that serve as a foundation for the case studies that follow. *Fundamentalism* in this thesis refers to a movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles.⁵ For the purposes of this study, this definition of fundamentalism applies to all subject groups of the case studies. *Extremism*, in contrast, is the advocacy of extreme measures or views. D.J. Mulloy expands the definition by explaining that extremism means going beyond the limits of the accepted normative procedures. He continues saying that “going beyond the limits” often entails engaging in violence as a means of achieving their aims.⁶ Fundamentalism and extremism provide an evolutionary timeline used in the subsequent case studies.

Fundamentalism provides the point of departure for understanding how a group believes, while extremism describes the decision to invoke violence and terror as a primary means to achieve the group’s objectives or spread its message. This distinction provides a simple understanding of group development from non-violent fundamentalism into violent extremism. Use of this concept across an entire spectrum of group types would require deeper analysis beyond the scope of this paper. For example, the application of this fundamentalism-extremism distinction to the Islamic-based *al-Qaeda* does not imply that all Islamic fundamentalist groups will evolve into extremism. For example, although the term “Salafi” has been applied to the al-Qaeda movement this reflects the beliefs of its core members, not all Salafi Muslims who are fundamentalist in their interpretation of the teachings of the Quran and the lifestyle of the Prophet

⁵ I have evolved this definition from various sources throughout my research for this thesis. One definition speaks specifically to the 20th century Protestant movement emphasizing the literal interpretation of the Bible as fundamental to Christian life and teaching. Although technically correct, it fails to encompass the global usage of the term to characterize certain groups. I have purposefully tried to use a definition that is applicable to the overall category of fundamentalism, rather than attaching it to a specific sect or culture.

⁶ Mulloy, D.J. *American Extremism: History, Politics and the Militia Movement*. (London: Routledge, 2004), 19.

Mohammed believe that violence or acts of terrorism are desirable, legal, or necessary.⁷ This thesis utilizes the methodology of process tracing, explained in detailed in Chapter 2, in reverse to examine extremist groups back to their fundamentalist roots. The objective of this technique is to determine if widely recognized factors are casual in the development among extremist groups.

The bulk of analysis for this thesis will occur through the selection and investigation of three case studies. In order to understand case study methodology, the term *case* requires definition. This thesis borrows its definition of case from Alexander L. George and his paper entitled *Case Studies and Theory Development*. He defines the term “case” to mean an instance of a class of events—where events refer to a phenomenon of scientific interest.⁸ The study of a case—case study—takes specific aspects of historical events rather than analyzing the entire event itself. This is a subtle yet important distinction. In order to prevent confusion with similar terms, such as comparative analysis, case study will encompass both within-case analysis of single cases and comparisons of a small number of cases. The increasingly accepted term for this methodology is the “qualitative method.” Acknowledging this fact, this thesis will use a comparative case study approach, as a subset of qualitative methodology, for its investigation.

Methodology

As mentioned in the definition section above, this thesis relies heavily on the qualitative method of case study analysis to identify patterns and determine conclusions. The primary advantage to case studies over statistical analysis comes from the ability of case studies to “heuristically identify new variables and hypotheses through the study of deviant or outlier cases and in the course of field work.”⁹ Further, case studies examine the casual relationship between separate mechanisms in a contextual manner. By doing so, case studies also allow the analyst to observe intervening variables, both internal and external to the case itself, for their impact on the case study. On the other hand, statistical

⁷ Salafism has evolved as a response to what some Muslims see as the secularization of their people and faith. For details see Yudian Wahyudi, “Hassan Hanafi on Salafism and Secularism,” in Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi‘, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 257-270.

⁸ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2005), 45.

⁹ George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, 20.

studies omit all contextual factors except those codified in the variables selected for measurement or used for constituting a population of cases, necessarily leaving out many contextual and intervening variables. This is an unacceptable practice when dealing with issues closely tied to human nature. Among these issues are the three areas for analysis in this thesis—recruitment, indoctrination/training, and radicalization. These three humanistic factors provide the focus of examination for this thesis and its analysis of extremist development.

Roadmap

Chapter 1 provides a brief historical sketch of fundamentalism and extremism through their present day forms. This puts the contemporary aspects of fundamentalism and extremism in the context of the Global War on Terrorism. By chronicling their historical paths, the conditions under which fundamentalism leads to extremism begin to emerge. The chapter concludes with a brief analysis of some nation-state approaches to the issues of fundamentalism and extremism. It also covers some of the countries that have impact on or are affected by the concept of fundamental-extremism.

Chapter 2 continues the fundamentalist-extremist discussion by introducing the evaluative scientific approach utilized by this thesis—case studies. Case studies provide an effective method of analysis for both fundamentalism and extremism. The analysis of case studies, as an evaluative tool, connects the theoretical concept of fundamentalism-extremism with practical examples. This chapter introduces a theoretical framework that explains a fundamental group's conversion to extremism. This framework connects how a fundamentalist organization progresses toward extremism by the processes they use to assimilate new members. Three case studies provide the basis to determine the applicability of the aforementioned framework this thesis presents. Although each of the case studies espouses different core interests and values, they all chose to engage in extremist actions in order to spread its message or prove its point. While many experts look to political factors as a key determinant, this thesis seeks to prove the process of people mining—recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization, holds the key to understanding this evolution. Specifically, people-mining affords extremist groups the ability to identify, select, nurture, and launch like-minded individuals into the global society with the purpose of instilling terror as a means of communication. This chapter

details the concept of people-mining as an explanatory tool for evaluating the three cases selected for this thesis. The framework for analysis begins with recruitment of individuals and continues through their indoctrination/training. The process ends with the radicalization of an individual into a violent extremist. The three case studies used in this thesis include Aum Shinrikyo, pre 9/11 *al-Qaeda*, and post 9/11 *al-Qaeda*. Chapter 2 is specifically broad in order to identify the basic linkages between three vastly different organizations. This proves the broad applicability of the people-mining concept to many other groups or organizations.

Chapters 3-5 take a generic understanding of the people-mining framework and apply it specifically to each case for study within the thesis. Each case study begins by introducing a specific group and providing a brief background. Each background discussion considers the group's ideological, political, and economic beliefs or status. This understanding provides a foundation from which to apply the people-mining framework. From there, each case study dissects a group's process for recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization. Key points for consideration include the specific goals of the organization as well as the importance individuals play in completion of these goals. From these case studies, the two main points of this thesis emerge.

First, people have been, and will continue to be, the most vital part of an extremist organization. Too often throughout history, nations have viewed extremist threats, both internal and external, as a singular entity. This is simply not the case. On the contrary, nation-states must acknowledge the humanistic characteristics of these violent organizations. In order to counter an extremist group's efforts, nations must be able to affect the ingredients of the organization's strength—people. As a result, nations must understand how and why individuals choose to become the fuel of extremism.

Second, while extensive research exists on extremist groups and in particular, their founders, very little analysis exists on the approaches these organizations use to fill their ranks. Rather than examining the problem of extremism from the top down, this thesis seeks to show that a real, tangible solution occurs by analyzing how these organizations recruit and train their members of violent organizations such as *al-Qaeda* or Aum Shinrikyo. Too often, leaders of organizations like these are untouchable, either figuratively or literally. Through a change in focus, counter extremist agencies can cut

the legs of these groups off, leaving them immobile and vulnerable to strategic counter offenses. Current US policy toward terrorist organizations categorizes them in a monastic, all-inclusive manner—hostile threat. US policy, as well as the policy of other nations, should begin to indentify fissures within these organizations. By understanding how an individual becomes an extremist, nations can begin to counter the people-mining process, thus strangling a key resource utilized by terrorists in its global war.

Chapter 1

Fundamental and/or Extreme: An Explanation and Connection

'I don't know what you mean by "glory",' Alice said. Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. 'Of course you don't—till I tell you. I meant, "There's a nice knock-down argument for you!"' 'But "glory" doesn't mean "a nice knock-down argument",' Alice objected. 'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean -- neither more nor less.'

-- Lewis Carroll

Fundamentalism, as it is called, is not confined to the Muslim world. It is something that we are seeing in different parts of the world as this stage. Let us hope that a dialogue between the followers of the three great monotheistic religions and the resolution of their differences, which should not be there in the first place, would help towards putting an end to the extremism that we suffer from.

-- King Hussein I

Fundamental Foundations

Fundamentalism frequently links together religion and terrorism.¹ Because of the term's elasticity, also it has become a source of misunderstanding and confusion. For example, contemporary scholars have labeled both Martin Luther and Osama bin Laden as fundamentalists in terms of their religious views.² There must be an explanation for why fundamentalism can explain such large and diverse aspects of history.

Unfortunately, it means many things to many people. For some people fundamentalism is about reductionism and nostalgia. For others, the term conveys bigotry and rigidity.³ This chapter's purpose is to discuss the origins of the term fundamentalism, the emergence of extremism, and the evolutionary connection between these two words.

¹ King Hussein I of Jordan, interview by Giacomo Mazzone. *Euronews: Prisma* (July 1, 1995), In the interview, his Majesty looks back on Jordan's road to peace with Israel and ahead to the type of Middle East envisaged in the future. Asked of his concerns about "fundamentalism" in Jordan, King Hussein points out that this phenomenon is not confined to the Muslim world, and that it is a political phenomenon and not a true manifestation of religious faith.

² NC Writings. "What is Fundamentalism." (*Mainstream Weekly*, March 16, 2008), 1

³ Susannah Heschel, "Fundamentalism in the Modern World." (*Sojourner's Magazine*, 2002: 1-6), 1

One method of defining a term starts with describing what it is not. Based on her book entitled *The Battle for God*, Karen Armstrong explained three common misconceptions about fundamentalism during a 2005 seminar. First, Armstrong believes that fundamentalism does not equal religious conservatism. She writes, “Billy Graham, for example, is not a fundamentalist: he would neither call himself a fundamentalist nor would he be claimed by the fundamentalist churches as one of their own.”⁴ Second, fundamentalism does not beget violence: “Only a tiny portion of fundamentalists worldwide take part in acts of terror; the rest simply struggle to live what they regard as a good religious life in a world that seems increasingly antagonistic to faith.”⁵ Finally, Armstrong warns the fundamentalism is not exclusively an Islamic phenomenon.⁶ In fact, the term “fundamentalism” began as a way of characterizing the response of early twentieth century American Protestants concerned about cultural and religious changes in the United States. *Fundamentalists* mounted a strenuous defense of the fundamentals (as they defined them) in response to other world religions, the theory of evolution, and growing biblical criticism. They outlined and advocated numerous changes in widely distributed namesake booklets called *The Fundamentals* (1910-1915).⁷

So then, what is fundamentalism? Drawing again from Armstrong, “it is essentially a revolt against modern secularism.”⁸ This revolt can take many forms, but often starts with the voluntary removal and purposeful isolation of a revolting group from mainstream society. This act serves to separate the group from those elements of society responsible for the perceived demise of religion within the group’s culture. Once separated from the godless or sinful portions of the world, fundamentalists form communities to support and defend the group’s beliefs. Typically, a fundamentalist group will initiate a counter campaign “designed to drag God, religion, or other belief from the sidelines to which they have been relegated in modern culture, and bring them

⁴ Karen Armstrong, "Intolerance and Fundamentalism Seminar." (LSE: LSE, 2005. 1-7), 1

⁵ Armstrong, Intolerance and Fundamentalism Seminar 2005 1

⁶ Armstrong, Intolerance and Fundamentalism Seminar 2005 2

⁷ Grant Wacker. "The Rise of Fundamentalism." (*National Humanities Center*, 2000), 1

⁸ Armstrong, Intolerance and Fundamentalism Seminar 2005 2 She continues this argument saying that wherever a Western polity exists separating the aspects of religion and politics, fundamentalist movements arise alongside to protest against their division.

back to center stage.”⁹ In most cases, the campaign is a peaceful, though committed effort to return society to a previous state for the group and its beliefs.

To the fundamentalist, modernity is the vessel of secularism, and thus the demise of religion. As sixteenth century cultures moved away from agrarian societies to one of rapid technological advancement, a wholly new way of thinking became essential. This resulted in the creation of a secular, more tolerant, democratic society.¹⁰ This also created fissures between the long withstanding beliefs of fundamentalists with those of new world modernists. The history of Western civilization is dotted with the traumatic and wrenching struggle for religious inclusion into the modern technological world. In many instances, this struggle is predominated by the profound difficulty a society encounters when trying to marry the concepts modernization and religious tradition.

This is the case for most developing nations. These societies view technological advancement as an impediment to one’s ability to express their own beliefs. The immensity and speed with which the modernization takes place leads many individuals to fear for the survival of society, as they know it.¹¹ From Hamas’ fight against the PLO to the US Protestant struggle to preserve a Christian nation, fundamental groups believe they are engaged in a “cosmic struggle for survival.”¹²

Although fundamentalists often wage committed campaigns designed to bring religion or other belief systems to the forefront of society they are rarely violent in nature. These revolts typically embrace a growing disappointment with the concepts of secularity and modernity. Typically, fundamentalists rely on propaganda and other information techniques to educate the population on their position. The dissemination of *The Fundamentals* (1900-1915) by Protestant fundamentalists is one such example. Another, more contemporary example is the door-to-door solicitation conducted by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

⁹ Armstrong, Intolerance and Fundamentalism Seminar 2005 2, Examples cited by Armstrong include the Ultraorthodox Jewish communities of New York and the Bob Jones University in South Carolina.

¹⁰ Sen, Amartya. "Democracy Isn't Western." *The Wall Street Journal*, March 24, 2006: <http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110008132>.

¹¹ Armstrong, Intolerance and Fundamentalism Seminar 2005 4

¹² Bruce Gourley, *The Fundamentalism Index*. January 1, 2003 <http://www.brucegourley.com/fundamentalism/index2.htm>, Gourley contends that all religious fundamentalists share certain similarities. He calls these similarities "family resemblances." He goes on to state that they can be found in all religious fundamentalist groups throughout the world. The cosmic struggle is among these similarities.

The Bridge to Extremism

If fundamentalism is the “revolt” against the evils of modernity, then extremism is violent potential of revolt.¹³ At its essence, “extremism is an ideology that advocates or attempts to bring about political, religious, economic, or social change through the use of force, violence, or ideologically motivated criminal activity.”¹⁴ Although a number of factors can spawn extremist action on any number of issues, this thesis focuses only on the religious aspect of extremism.¹⁵ The difference between fundamentalism and extremism lies in the abdication of force. Where fundamentalists and extremists both seek change, extremists believe force is the only means through which to achieve the desired change. It is an important point that fundamentalism does not create extremism, as this distinction informs current US counterterrorism policy.¹⁶ Extremism is in many ways a parasitic offshoot of unfulfilled fundamentalist desires. D.J. Mulloy agrees with this but adds that extremists are what the mainstream is not.¹⁷ In particular, extremists are unable or unwilling to accept change within the system and instead shift responsibility on those who disagree with them.¹⁸ Extremists cling to their deep-seated roots viewing violence not as a new direction, but rather the next logical step in the fundamentalist defense of their societal beliefs from annihilation. This differs significantly from the view of fundamentalists of defending against annihilation, who abdicate peaceful means to combat the threat to their existence.

¹³ The primary extreme measure referenced throughout this thesis is the act of terrorism.

¹⁴ Tim Stevens, *UbiWar*. May 11, 2009. http://ubihar.com/2009/05/11/defining-extremism/#_ftnref2

¹⁵ Attempting to cover political, economic, or social instigators for extremist action is well beyond the scope of this paper.

¹⁶ Daniel Benjamin, *U.S. Government Efforts To Counter Violent Extremism*, Testimony Before the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington D.C.: US Government, 2010, Mr. Benjamin is the Coordinator, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism. During his March 10, 2010 testimony before the Senate Armed Services subcommittee, Mr. Benjamin stated that extremists must be isolated from the population before they can be targeted. Additionally, Mr. Benjamin testified that radicalization (and the extremism it spawns) is of primary concern to the US because of its appeal to violent extremist organizations (VEO). His entire testimony is available on the US Department of State website.

¹⁷ D.J. Mulloy is a Research Fellow at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he also teaches about the history of political extremism. He has taught American Studies at the University of East Anglia and is the editor of *Homegrown Revolutionaries: An American Militia Reader*, and the book entitled *American Extremism History, Politics, and the Militia Movement*.

¹⁸ Mulloy, *American Extremism*, 26-33 Mulloy pulls heavily from the work of John George and Laird Wilcox. His use of “A Handy Guide for Extremist Watchers” provides the foundation for his assertions.

The idea of annihilation is not new to fundamentalism. In fact, it was present in all three of the religious fundamentalist movements studied by Karen Armstrong in *The Battle for God*. She contends that fundamentalist followers of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are all convinced that the modern secular society wants to remove [annihilate] religion from the human conscience—even in the United States.¹⁹ She illustrates her point by noting:

In some Muslim countries, modernization occurred so quickly that secularism has been experienced as an assault. When Mustafa Kemal Atatürk created modern secular Turkey; he closed down all the *madrasas* and abolished the Sufi order. He also forced all men and women to wear Western dress. Reformers such as Atatürk wanted their countries to *look* modern. In Iran, the shahs used to make their soldiers walk through the streets with their bayonets out, tearing off women's veils and ripping them to pieces in front of them. In 1935, Shah Reza Pahlavi gave his soldiers orders to shoot at unarmed demonstrators in Mashhad, one of the holiest shrines in Iran, who were peacefully protesting against obligatory Western clothes. Hundreds of Iranians died that day. In such circumstances, secularism has not been experienced as liberating and civilized, but as wicked, lethal and murderously hostile to faith.

Reading Armstrong's illustrative vignette, it is easy to understand why some individuals believe that they are fighting for their survival of their beliefs and way of life. Because of this belief, some individuals and groups turn to violence in order to combat the extreme persecution they faced. Seyyid Qutb is one example of the progression of fundamentalist belief into extremism. Qutb spent a total of two years of academic study in the United States, earning an M.A. in education from Northern Colorado University. Many scholars believe that it was during his trip to the United States that Qutb became convinced of the spiritual and moral bankruptcy of the West.²⁰ Qutb's observations during this trip, combined with his disillusionment with the secular and modernist pan-Arabism preached by Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, were influential in solidifying his growing fundamentalist beliefs. Imprisoned in 1954 for allegedly plotting the assassination of Nasser, Qutb watched as fellow members of the Muslim Brotherhood were tortured and executed for beliefs similar to his own. This fact, coupled with Qutb's belief that Nasser

¹⁹ Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*. (New York: Random House, 2000), vii

²⁰ See for example Adnan A. Musallam, *From Secularism to Jihad: Seyyid Qutb and the Foundations of Radical Islamism* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 117-136.

sought to marginalize Islam within Egypt, led to Qutb's increasingly frustrated and violent extremist views. Using his own understanding of the ultra-modern and morally bankrupt west, Qutb vowed not to let the same fate befall the nation of Islam and particularly Egypt.²¹

Examples like Qutb provide a concrete example that demonstrates how fundamentalist beliefs about one's survival can lead to extremist action. However, in the years following Qutb, fundamentalism and extremism have grown the boundaries of one's own country. Attacks like those on September 11, 2001 served as a rallying cry to extremists, worldwide.²² This clouded the understanding of exactly what is fundamental or extreme, and where it exists. The 9/11 attacks created a public perception that only terrorists are fundamental and extreme. This is simply not true. Fundamentalism is a global phenomenon and it is not restricted to a specific region, race, culture, or timeframe. In addition, some but not all fundamentalists are extremists. John George and Laird Wilcox explain this phenomenon using a hypothetical linear scale, saying that "beyond a certain point on each end of the spectrum lie the extremists...the 2 percent, say on the far left and far right."²³ Muzaffar Iqbal acknowledged this reality within Islam during a 2003 interview on the Public Broadcasting Service. "There are people," Iqbal says, "who call themselves Muslims and they are extremists, right? We have to distinguish between Islam and the Muslims who say we are practicing Islam in this extreme way...we don't call them fundamentalists, we call them *quarige*."²⁴ *Quarige* is an Arabic word meaning someone who has gone away from the roots. Iqbal further clarifies that "[a]s soon as you become extreme, you have automatically gone out from the middle part."²⁵ Just as fundamentalism is a global and highly diverse phenomenon,

²¹ Luke Loboda, *The Thought of Sayyid Qutb*. Thesis [if this is a thesis, then presumably it is unpublished. Cite according to AU Style Guide or Chicago Manual of Style], (Ashland: Ashland University, 2004), 1-3. Loboda draws his conclusions from writings Qutb finished following his time in America. In "The America I Have Seen", a personal account of his experiences in United States, Qutb expresses his admiration for the great economic and scientific achievements of America, yet he is deeply dismayed that such prosperity could exist in a society that remained abysmally primitive in the world of the senses, feelings, and behavior.

²² In the case of the 9/11 attacks, the call was to Islamic extremists.

²³ John George and Laird Wilcox, *American Extremists: Militias, Supremacists, Klansmen, Communists, and Others*, (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1996) 11

²⁴ Muzaffar Iqbal, interview by Don Miller. *Closer to the Truth: Can Religion Withstand Technology* (March 14, 2003) http://www.pbs.org/kcet/closetotruth/transcripts/314_religiontech.pdf

²⁵ Muzaffar, *Closer to the Truth* http://www.pbs.org/kcet/closetotruth/transcripts/314_religiontech.pdf

so too is extremism. Although countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Sudan, and Algeria receive criticism as the root sources of the extremism that influences terrorist violence, every continent, country, province, state, city, and town has the seeds with which to sow both fundamentalism and extremism. While many extremist groups direct their efforts against internal enemies, an increasing number of religious extremist groups are exporting the violence.

To the uninformed, distinguishing between fundamentalism and extremism may not seem difficult or important. Understanding the connections and distinctions between fundamentalism and extremism, as well as extremism and global terrorism, is not only necessary but also crucial if US policy is to succeed. This chapter separated the two forms of religious revolt and identified that extremism is characterized by the belief that violence is the only way to achieve the desired religious outcome. If extremists only constitute the violent two-percent of a population, the meaningful question for policy is how to separate this minority from the peaceful middle. Chapter Two establishes a framework to address this question by providing the potential factors might contribute/explain a fundamentalist group's radical evolution into extremism.

Chapter 2

Methodology and Framework

Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth.

- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Method Selection

The observation by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle about improbability and truth has unknowingly inspired a number of authors in their quest to understand the relationship between fundamentalism and extremism.¹ One method to answer questions of truth between the two terms is through the application of a theory or hypothesis. Pulling from the introduction, the problem this thesis recognizes is that current approaches for combating terrorism do not adequately account for the entirety of factors that allow some fundamentalist groups who embrace extremism to survive, while others do not. The hypothesis to solve this problem proposes that the study of an extremist group's membership can provide this explanation. The framework to prove this hypothesis uses an extremist group's recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization techniques to determine a causal relationship. Case studies are crucial to this approach.

The concept of case studies has existed since the beginning of recorded history. Case studies, as described by Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, are a detailed examination of an aspect of a historical event (case) to develop or test historical explanations that may be generally applicable to other events.² The case study approach allows social scientists to identify the relevance of theories by assessing *whether* and *how* a theory's variable mattered to the outcome of the case rather than assessing *how much* it mattered to the case overall.³ The use of case studies in scientific research has fallen in and out of favor over the course of history. The cause of this vacillation results mostly

¹ This list includes Sageman, Mulloy, Forrest, Stern, Brackett, Gold, Wright and many others who used historical case studies to support their theories on everything from domestic militias to radical Islamists

² Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2005) 5

³ George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, 25

from the increased utilization of statistical methodology over recent decades.⁴ However, statistical data cannot account for the qualitative variables of the mind and its ability to make value-based decisions.

Case studies do provide particular advantages over other methods regardless of the amount of data available for analysis. Dr. Robert Yin offers a few of these advantages in his book entitled *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. He argues that case studies are most effective when explaining contemporary events that include relevant behaviors incapable of manipulation by the researcher. Yin also cites direct observation and reasoning of patient behaviors and the interpretation of interviews with those involved as advantageous aspects of the case study approach.⁵ Collectively, Yin describes the concept of applying some level of intuition to research. Robert Stake also referenced the idea of applying intuition to case studies, but tempered his statement recognizing the concern that including intuitive data brings saying, researchers should not “depend on mere intuition and good intentions to get it right.”⁶ Recently, concern has waned over the impact of intuition in case studies. Safe guards such as Stakes’ triangulation principle have alleviated the apprehension of associated with the impact a researcher’s intuition has on a case study. This resulted in an increased utilization of case studies in social science theory development.⁷ Regardless of its debated efficacy, researchers have successfully used the case study research method for many years across a wide variety of disciplines.

Even with its acceptance, many scientists still debate the proper way to incorporate case studies. The debate over this disagreement refers to the concept of large-N versus small-n analysis. The verbiage suggests that the salient difference between the two methods is in the number of cases studied. Critics of the case study method of analysis argue that a small number of cases cannot provide enough

⁴ Susan Soy, "The Case Study Method as a Research Method." (*University of Texas*, 1997) 1-10

⁵ Robert Yin, *Case Study Research Design and Methods, fourth Edition* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2009) 10-11

⁶ Robert Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995) 107

⁷ George and Bennett discuss three specific similarities between case studies, statistical methods and formal modeling. Each technique uses similar epistemological logic, but differs in the methodological logic. All three attempt to develop logically consistent theories. They derive observable implications and test them against empirical data. However, the reasoning used to determine this information illuminates the differences. They conclude the discussion by extolling the requirement to consider all three because of their “complementary comparative advantages.”

information to establish generalities of causation.⁸ In addition, those critics also believe that small numbers of cases are more vulnerable to researcher bias and selecting cases that fit the theory, rather than prove or disprove a hypothesis in the aggregate. Still others argue that the case study method places immense importance on intuition in the process.⁹ The detractors claim that the difficulty in placing a value on intuitions makes their inclusion a waste of time. Proponents of the case study approach refute these assertions. As a hedge against bias, case study researchers create narrowly defined frameworks that focus examination on a particular portion of a study. Whereas the case study method draws its results from a small number, and therefore manageable number of observable cases with sufficient detail, the statistical method seeks to maximize the number of included cases at the expense detail. As one author has phrased it: "In our bigger is better culture, this language implies that large-N methods are always preferable when sufficient data is available for study."¹⁰

Just as there are differences in the number of case studies used, there are also differences in the types of case studies available. Some of the more popular versions include illustrative, exploratory, cumulative, and critical instance case studies.¹¹ This thesis will use the critical instance approach to case studies to establish evidence in support of its findings. The critical instance approach examines one or more examples for the purpose of either calling into question or challenging a highly generalized or universal assertion.¹² This method is useful for answering cause and effect questions, which lends itself to understanding if a causal relationship exists to explain why some extremist groups survive over time while others do not.

It is important to note at this point that differences exist between the use of case studies for physical science and with those related to this thesis—social or philosophical

⁸ J.S. Chima, "What's the Utility of the Case-Study Method for Social Science Research? A Response to Critiques from the Qualitative/Statistical Perspective." *American Political Science Association*. (Washington D.C.: University of California at Berkeley, 2005. 1-27) 1-2

⁹ George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, 17

¹⁰ Lijphart, Arend. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review*, 1971, 682-693

¹¹ The 1990 Government Accounting Office report on case study evaluations, found at <http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/pe1019.pdf>, provides an in-depth discussion of the case study types listed. Authors including Robert Stake, Robert Yin, and Alexander George also provide detailed explanations of case studies.

¹² Mike Palmquist, *Writing at CSU*. January 1, 1993-2010 <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/casestudy/com2b1.cfm> (accessed February 17, 2010)

science. As noted by George and Bennett, “much of the discourse [in the study of philosophical science and international relations in particular] is structured among ‘schools of thought’ —neorealism, neoliberalism, and constructivism—that some scholars consciously modeled after Thomas Kuhn’s paradigms.”¹³ Awareness of this tendency is important to prevent this thesis from predetermining the results of each case study analysis by placing an international relations moniker on different extremist groups. This also allows each case study to include causation in its analysis. Causation includes unobservable physical, social, or psychological processes through which fringe actors within the study can affect the main entity’s characteristics, capacities, or propensities in ways that persist.¹⁴ Causation can be direct or indirect in its impact. For the purpose of this thesis, identifiable mechanisms will represent the existence of causation in a case study. Mechanisms, in general terms, connect things. More specifically, a mechanism is “a set of hypotheses that could be the explanation for social phenomenon, the explanation being in terms of interactions between individuals and other individuals, or between individuals and some social aggregate.”¹⁵ One example of a causal factor would be the impact of outside entity like the United States on a particular extremist organization. The concept of recognizing causation is important because it connects the documented history of an extremist group to an explanatory framework like the one proposed below.

Framework Introduction

Building on the understanding of causation, this thesis will use a framework that specifically addresses the presence of direct and indirect causal factors. Frameworks are important to the case study approach because they apply analytical procedures to each case. This ensures the inclusion of qualitative factors often over looked in more quantitative processes. The framework developed for this thesis seeks to apply the aspects of recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization to a fundamental group’s extremist evolution in order to determine each of the three aspect’s impact on that group’s survival. This process [identified from this point forward as the *Conversion Process*] greatly affects a group’s ability to create, control, and manipulate its members

¹³ George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, 127

¹⁴ George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, 136-137

¹⁵ Renate Mayntz, Renate, *Mechanisms in the Analysis of Macro-Social Phenomena*. (MPIfG Working Paper 03/3, Cologne: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies 2003)

in order to accomplish its extremist goals. If people are the means by which fundamental groups promote their ideologies, then it can be inferred that extremist groups also rely heavily upon its members to accomplish its goals—use of extreme measures as the primary means of promoting the fundamentalist ideologies.¹⁶ Extremist groups rarely revert to fundamental, much less mainstream, beliefs. Therefore, the conversion process employed by extremist groups may hold the key to understanding the casual factors that allow some fundamentalist groups to survive the transition into extremism, while others cannot. To determine the validity of this idea, the framework used for subsequent case studies in this thesis will focus on the three component parts of the conversion process—recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization—utilized by extremist organizations.

Recruitment

Recruitment is the first step employed by groups seeking to enlarge its member base. Because both fundamentalist and extremist groups rely heavily on its membership to carry its ideology to the population, recruitment is very important. *Recruitment* refers to the process of attracting, screening, and selecting qualified people for a job at an organization or firm.¹⁷ However, several popular connotations exist regarding recruitment. Recruitment occurs in a variety of different manners and mediums, but the end goal is the same—increased members loyal to a cause. In a contemporary context, the term recruitment describes everything from selecting a university for education to finding employment. In both examples, recruiters do not randomly select people to fill out a quota. Rather, recruiters seek out individuals who will be productive and reflect positively on the organization. In reference to terrorism, a similar connotation exists in that many believe that fundamental and extremist groups recruit members similar to how one chooses sides in a sporting event, with little regard to the individual's organizational utility. In reality, this recruitment is a vastly complex process that serves a variety of purposes ranging from attracting potential recruits to screening and ultimately determining their viability as a member. In fact, recruitment is usually a primary task of

¹⁶ The primary extreme measure referenced throughout this thesis is the act of terrorism.

¹⁷ Wikimedia Corporation, *Recruitment*. February 16, 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recruitment>

terrorist training.¹⁸ The aforementioned end goal of the recruitment process is to increase the number of like-minded individuals within the organization, while simultaneously preventing uncommitted individuals from joining the group.¹⁹ Neither fundamentalist nor extremist groups are different in this goal. In fact, fundamentalist and extremist groups tend to imitate the techniques and procedures of large business corporations and organizations, because of the success the latter generates.²⁰ In order to determine the actual impact of recruitment on the conversion process, the case study framework will look at three specific areas of recruitment. These areas include the locations used to find new recruits, the general characteristics some groups look for in new recruits, and group inducements used to secure an individual's initial commitment to the cause.

Conventional wisdom on real estate investing suggests that the key to success relates heavily to the location of the property. This wisdom is also applicable for fundamentalist and extremist groups as the first aspect of recruitment is location.²¹ However, in a world where virtually anywhere that people gather—either physically or on-line—can serve as a recruitment center, how does an extremist group choose a location to set up shop? The notion of “location selection” addresses three specific instances as they pertain to the conversion process. The first instance or situation occurs when potential recruits actively seek out the group. This instance covers situations where the group holds a high level of prestige locally, regionally, or as in the case of *al-Qaeda*, globally. Although countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan serve as a magnet for Islamic militants other more discreet locations can also fit into this instance. Prison populations serve as a “captive” audience for many groups to spew their ideologies based on anger and resentment. Michael Waller noted this reality stating, “Prisons are age-old breeding

¹⁸ Marc Galanter and James J.F. Forrest. "Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems: Understanding the Transformation of Terrorist Recruits." In *The Making of a Terrorist; volume 2*, by James J.F. Forrest, 51-70. (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2006) 55

¹⁹ The purpose of preventing uncommitted individuals from joining also provides an additional layer of security and stability within the organization by eliminating potentially contrary and dysfunctional thought amongst organizational members.

²⁰ James J.F. Forrest, *The Making of a Terrorist; volume 1, Recruitment*, (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006) The tactics used by the fundamental groups examined in volume 1 of this work include social networking, chat rooms, web sites, academic campus visits, church and mosque monitoring, as well as word of mouth recruitment. Fundamentalist extremist groups used such methods successfully within the business community prior to their employment.

²¹ Although covered in more depth later, it is important to note that location is not solely a physical manifestation of recruiting. Location can also refer to virtual existences found on the internet through social networking sites and chat rooms.

grounds for political extremists of practically all ideologies and cultures.”²² Over time, inmates internalize many of the fundamentalist beliefs available to them from fellow prisoners. This is similar to the experiences of Seyyid Qutb, considered by many to be one of the most influential writers of those who inspired the current wave of military Islamic *jihadi* violence. During his multiple incarcerations, Qutb evolved from mainstream activist to violent extremist. His experiences and reflection in during his prison years directly contributed to his development as a jihadist ideologue.²³ The result of experiences like that of Qutb provides a fertile environment where fundamentalist or extremist groups do not need to seek recruits. Rather, individuals approach the group on their own seeking membership because of their shared values.

The second type of location-based recruitment occurs when fundamentalist groups actively seek out recruits in ideologically supportive areas. These locations typically include religiously significant areas like churches, mosques, and temples. Other areas frequented by recruiters include educational sites (universities, private schools, and madrasas), social sites (community centers, volunteer sites, and prisons), and even virtually created locations on the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, and hosted websites).²⁴ In particular, internet recruitment can be effective but is often time-consuming as Madeline Gruen notes: “First, extremists need to locate their target subject on the World Wide Web, which is not much easier than finding a needle in a haystack. They post messages on web boards and in chat rooms where individuals vulnerable to extremist ideology spend time.”²⁵ Gruen goes on to say that by identifying potential supporters online, “a virtual world is created that provides all the social support necessary

²² Michael J. Waller, "Prisons as Terrorist Breeding Grounds." In *The Making of a Terrorist; volume 1*, by James J.F. Forrest, 23-41 (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2006) 23

²³ Loboda, *The Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, 2-4; Egyptian president Abdul Nassar imprisoned Qutb on three separate occasions. Each imprisonment occurred as a result of the belief, by Egyptian officials, that Qutb sought to overthrow Nassar's government. The last of his sentences ended with his death in 1966 by hanging. His death resulted in Qutb becoming a martyr for Sunni Islamic violent extremists and one of his seminal works, *Milestones*, their core text.

²⁴ Forrest, *Exploiting the Recruitment of Terrorists: An Introduction* 2006, 5; Gruen 2006, 11; Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2004) 160; Gabriel Weimann, "Terrorist Dot Com: Using the Internet for Terrorist Recruitment and Mobilization." In *The Making of a Terrorist; volume 1*, by James J.F. Forrest, 54-65. (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2006) 53-55, 57-58

²⁵ Gruen, *Innovative Recruitment and Indoctrination*, 13

to satisfy the prospective recruit's needs and to change his worldview.”²⁶ This is the virtual version of tactics employed by fundamentalist/extremist groups for centuries. Group members maintain surveillance of places like churches, civic centers, or madrasas to identify potential applicants.²⁷ Once identified, the potential recruits are physically secluded from outside interference, including family, colleagues, and friends, so that indoctrination (see below) can occur.

The third and last instance of recruitment location for fundamentalist groups can be thought of as a “perfect storm” because it combines the active recruitment efforts of a fundamental/extremist group at a location of ideological relevance to potential recruits. In this instance, individuals actively seek out fundamentalist groups in an area in which the latter is actively recruiting. One example of such recruitment is convicted American born terrorist Timothy McVeigh. A decorated veteran of the first Gulf War, McVeigh held little regard for the US government and its practices of control and taxation. Fed up with what he perceived the declining state of American affairs, McVeigh resigned from his Army reserve unit in May 1992. Following this event, he began the search for a state free of oppressive taxes and federal control. Although transient, McVeigh found kindred spirits among gun show patrons, who travelled across the nation selling their wares and spouting their anti-government mantra. It was at this time that McVeigh also reunited with old Army friends Terry Nichols and Michael Fortier.²⁸ These men would become McVeigh's co-conspirators in the Alfred P. Murrah building bombing in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995.²⁹ Using the writings of Andrew Macdonald, McVeigh's growing anger meshed with Nichols and Fortier's technical knowledge of explosives and the triggers of Ruby Ridge, Idaho and Waco, Texas to thrust McVeigh's plan into reality.³⁰

²⁶ Gruen, *Innovative Recruitment and Indoctrination*, 14

²⁷ Forrest, *Exploiting the Recruitment of Terrorists*, 5-8

²⁸ Lou Michel, Lou, and Dan Herbeck. *Bombing, American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City* (New York: Harper Collins 2001) 121-123

²⁹ For more information on Timothy McVeigh or the Oklahoma City bombing reference Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck's book *American Terrorist* and *Tabernacle of Hate* by Kerry Noble.

³⁰ For more information on Ruby Ridge, reference the 1995 Congressional Hearings on Intelligence and Security (http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1995_hr/s951019f.htm). For more information on the Branch Davidian siege in Waco, reference the Danforth Report (<http://www.cesnur.org/testi/DanforthRpt.pdf>).

This series of events exemplifies the force that active recruiting of the right people in the right locations can have on an organization's ability to accomplish its goals.³¹

This type of scenario is becoming more common due in large part to the internet. Not only does the internet provide a medium through which like-minded individuals can gather, it also provides an ability to communicate across large distances and connect potentially large numbers of prospective recruits together. Individuals seeking to find a fundamentalist home receive information directing them to fundamentalist/extremist websites, chat rooms, or actual physical addresses where they can link up with the groups they seek to join. Together, these three instances of location form the basis by which a group recruits potential followers. Once identified, targeted, and accepted fundamentalist groups move recruits into the second phase of the conversion process: *Indoctrination*.

Indoctrination

The over-arching goal during the next step in the conversion process of a recruit is to change their views. Most recruits who join an extremist organization hold only a loose affiliation with the charters or ideologies of their new parent group. For this reason, groups seek to remove the ties that hold new recruits to their previous belief systems. Most often, this requires a physical change of location. This removes outside competition from the recruit's world.³² As Marc Sageman notes, *al-Qaeda* used this practice extensively in its earliest years. Following the *mujahadeen* victory over the Soviet Union, the Islamic militant group that would become *al-Qaeda* began to bring recruits to Afghanistan in order to pledge *baya*—a formal oath of loyalty to *al-Qaeda* and its leader Osama bin Laden. This occurred before any other indoctrination would commence. Once part of the *jihad*, Sageman continues, followers remained in Afghanistan for formal training.³³ Separated from their former lives, the group leads new followers down the process of indoctrination in which training and other duties not only

³¹ Andrew Macdonald is the pseudonym of William Luther Pierce, former leader of the white supremacist organization, National Alliance, used to write the racist propaganda book entitled *The Turner Diaries*. *The Turner Diaries* depicts a violent revolution in the United States which leads to the overthrow of the US federal government, nuclear war, and, ultimately, to a race war leading to the extermination of all Jews and non-whites.

³² Groups seek to replace a recruits existing support structure with one of their own. By doing this, the group can eliminate outside competing interests from the recruits support system.

³³ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 91-92 Sageman notes that Afghanistan is the most common destination for *al-Qaeda* training, but some members would travel to Bosnia, the Philippines, Malaysia, or Indonesia after accepting the oath of loyalty.

demonstrates loyalty to the group but also provides the individual with a purpose and tasks to keep their mind occupied.

Once disconnected from their previous belief system, the indoctrination process establishes a new authority for a recruit to rely upon. The goal here is to modify, alter, or entirely replace the recruits beliefs and norms. An authority can manifest itself as an ideology or as an individual leader. In the instance of an authority figure, his own thoughts must necessarily link tightly with the group's core beliefs. A common theme among many recruits is the need for both inclusion and direction. This theme establishes a dependant bond between the recruit and the group. Cults, as many experts categorize fundamentalist and extremist groups, provide members with emotional stability and relief resulting from economic, social, and/or psychological stresses experienced prior to joining the group.³⁴ There are four elements involved in the establishment of a charismatic guide for new recruits.³⁵ These four elements include the introduction and acceptance of a shared belief system between the recruit and the group. The second element is the establishment of a high level of social cohesiveness between the recruit and the group. The third element of authoritative command over a recruit involves influencing the recruit's behavioral norms. The final element of authoritative transfer requires a recruits belief that the group and/or its leaders hold an undeniable charismatic [or sometimes divine] power, which they use to guide the group and its members. Together these elements solidify the foundation of indoctrination and provide a springboard for the final phase of indoctrination.

The last phase of indoctrination involves transforming the individual into a likeness of the group, in mind, body, and spirit. This essentially removes the individual's identity, replacing it with the characteristics, goals, and ideologies of the organization. By allowing this transformation, the recruit understands that he will gain more success or achievement than ever possible by himself. The group is strengthened by the follower's willingness to perpetuate the process through recruitment and transformation of new members. Marc Galanter agrees writing that "members would not, on their own, be

³⁴ Galanter and Forrest, *Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems*, 51

³⁵ Arthur J. Diekman, "The Psychological Power of Charismatic Leaders in Cults and Terrorist Organizations." In *The Making of a Terrorist; volume 2, Training*, by James J.F. Forrest, 71-83 (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2006) 71-74; (Galanter and Forrest 2006) 66-70

inclined to go out and recruit for the group, but as parts of its system they come to act in accordance with its goals.”³⁶ He continues by suggesting that indoctrination ties the actions of the individual to the group’s ultimate success: “At some point in their evolution, most charismatic groups focus on recruitment as a primary task. The process may ensure a larger and stronger group and, when successful, can also confer legitimacy to the group’s own ideology, thereby consolidating the commitment of its long-standing members.”³⁷

To accomplish the task of assimilation, the group disrupts the psychological stability of the recruit. This tactic can be effective, but it is not without risks. One of the risks is psychological trauma of uncertainty, and doubt: “Since intense mobilization of a charismatic group’s psychological and material resources may be directed at the conversion of new members, they can create deep turmoil in the individual convert.”³⁸ Once disrupted, the group installs new doctrines by which the follower will exist and operate. Doctrines may be conveyed in person orally or in the form of written works which reflect the core beliefs of the group. Examples of fundamentalist doctrinal works include *Milestones* by radical Islamist Seyyid Qutb and *The Turner Diaries* by US domestic fundamentalist William Luther Pierce (under the pseudonym Andrew Macdonald). Both of these works served as the foundation of thought and action for the extremist groups who used them. Each contains calls to action requiring its readers elevate their consciousness, stop current patterns of behavior, and conform to the higher calling and lifestyle described in the teachings. For example, *The Turner Diaries* served as an ideological indoctrination platform for Timothy McVeigh as well as providing him with the inspiration on how to attack the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.³⁹ After installing the new doctrine, the group institutes a repetitive, yet rigorous training regimen that reinforces the foundations of transformation. During this phase, the process also introduces the concepts of protection and monitoring. In order to operate effectively,

³⁶ Galanter and Forrest, *Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems*, 55

³⁷ Galanter and Forrest, *Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems*, 55

³⁸ Galanter and Forrest, *Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems*, 55 Galanter continues this thought by discussing the balance between the seductive draw a fundamental group has to potential members and the group demands of total disruption of antecedent social ties and a metamorphosis in the new member’s worldview.

³⁹ Camille Jackson, "Fightin' Words." *Southern Poverty Law Center*. Fall 2004, <http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-report/browse-all-issues/2004/fall/fightin-words>

the group must maintain the ability to manipulate the inputs a recruit encounters during the last phases of his transformation. This allows the group to observe and regulate the component parts of its organization (members), so that the output meets the group's intent.⁴⁰ Protection occurs in two ways: information screening and regulation of the recruit's outside contact. Monitoring occurs in concert with the protection tactic. Monitoring can be either voluntary or involuntary and is a key enabler of the last step in the conversion process—radicalization.

Radicalization

Radicalization builds upon the fundamentalist roots developed during the recruitment and indoctrination phases of conversion. Using these underpinnings, radicalization combines the social bond building and psychological transformation begun in fundamentalism with hatred, anger, and a propensity for violence to express the radical extremist view. Radicalization further narrows the views of the doctrine introduced during the indoctrination phase, taking a militant view of those who do not subscribe to the teachings. It rationalizes violent action as a means of expression, finally embedding the idea of one's struggle and sacrifice as a key requirement of the group's long-term success. Although radicalization results from indoctrination, this is not an absolute condition. Stated more simply, radicalization is not always the result of the conversion process. In fact, most fundamental groups never espouse extreme or radical intentions. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, a trigger often provides a fundamental group with the impetus to cross the extremism threshold.

Seyyid Qutb's fight against *Jahiliyyah* [ignorance of divine guidance] through his understanding of the Muslim holy book the *Quran* provides one example of the process of radicalizing a fundamental view and the trigger that caused it. It is important to remember that Qutb believed his enemies sought the marginalization of Islam first through his own imprisonment and then through his execution.⁴¹ Qutb's jailhouse manifesto, *Milestones*, spoke passionately about the action required to overcome this potential pitfall for Islam. Qutb described the *Jahili* lifestyle as one of marvelous material comforts and high-level inventions. He continued, "*Jahiliyyah* claims the right

⁴⁰ Galanter and Forrest, *Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems*, 56-57

⁴¹ Seyyid Qutb, *Milestones* (Damascus: Dar Al-Ilm, 1964) 11

to create values, to legislate collective behavior, and to choose the way of a man's life, without regard to what God has prescribed."⁴²

Had Qutb remained only fundamentalist in his fight against *Jahiliyyah*, *Milestones* would not hold the position it does in today's Islamic extremist circles.⁴³ However, *Milestones* devotes an entire chapter to the concept of *jihad* as a means to victory.⁴⁴ Qutb's intense hatred of *Jahiliyyah* inspired Islamic modernity led him to announce the commencement of a *jihad* against any who opposed his interpretation of the *Quran* and its teachings. Qutb believed only a *jihad* would return *Allah* to the center of Islamic thought. He wrote, "The reasons for *jihad* are these: to establish God's authority in the earth; to arrange human affairs according to the true guidance provided by God; to end lordship of one man over others, since all men are creatures of God and no one has the authority to make them his servants or to make arbitrary laws for them."⁴⁵ Qutb's writings "encouraged members to believe that they are fighting on behalf of Islam against the enemies of God, epitomized by Western civilization, and especially the United States...and where the use of violence and killing of civilians are considered part of the strategy and hence religiously sanctioned."⁴⁶

Other groups, such as *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) of Indonesia, also illustrate the process of radicalization. In the case of JI, the process of radicalizing its members is different and much more formal. JI weaves its radical thoughts into the indoctrination process from the beginning by introducing recruits to the radical Islamic ideology of *Qaedaism*.⁴⁷ Next, JI applies intensive psychological programming aimed at engendering

⁴² Qutb, *Milestones*, 10-11

⁴³ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 9, Qutb's *Milestones*, published in 1964, is the manifesto of the Salafi jihad and its later global variant. Specifically *al-Qaeda* leaders Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Abu Musab al-Suri, and Abu Yahya al-Libi all reference Qutb's works as a genesis for their own jihadist ideology.

⁴⁴ The word Jihad is Arabic in origin and means to struggle or fight. Jihad is the only form of warfare permissible under Islamic law and may be declared against apostates, violent groups, non-Islamic leaders or non-Muslim combatants. The primary aim of jihad as warfare is not the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam by force, but rather the expansion and defense of the Islamic state through forceful means.

⁴⁵ (Qutb, *Milestones*, 70 Qutb also includes "to abolish all the Satanic forces and Satanic systems of life" in his list, but its inclusion is not pertinent to this discussion.

⁴⁶ Rohan Gunaratna and Arabinda Acharya. "The Terrorist Camps of Al Qaeda." In *The Making of a Terrorist*; volume 2, by James J.F. Forrest, 172-194 (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2006) 176

⁴⁷ Kumar Ramakrishna, "Indoctrination Processes Within Jemaah Islamiyah." In *The Making of a Terrorist*, by James J.F. Forrest, 211-224 (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2006) 211; Qaedaism, or bin Ladenism, embraces violent anti-Western doctrine and the call for Taliban-style theocracies around the Muslim world and beyond.

a hatred of the West in its followers. This process marries the introduction radical thought with violent expression. This usually occurs within the confines of an isolated existence referred to as “in-group space.”⁴⁸ Here, “in-group members, despite their assumed innate moral superiority, are led to feel that the out-group enjoys greater power and status resources, are worse, is holding back or even physically harming the in-group through nefarious means.”⁴⁹ The net effect of such radicalization is “deeply insular, religiously-driven fighters...endowed with a religiously legitimated bigotry that ultimately transmogrifies into hatred toward the out-group, especially Westerners and Americans in particular.”⁵⁰

Although not always the result of recruitment and indoctrination, radicalization is the most extreme of the potential outcomes a fundamental group hopes to achieve. Radicalization is also a key component in a fundamental group’s evolution into extremism. Therefore, it holds an equally important place in the conversion framework described at the beginning of this chapter. Extremism begets violence. The following chapters will devote ample time to understanding the rationale that led a particular organization to believe violence was the only viable option left at their disposal. For the purposes of this thesis, violent action toward civilians and non-combatants will represent the criteria to determine extreme action.

This chapter served to introduce the case study framework and to provide historical context for the rationale used to develop it. Understanding that the process of how organizations convert recruits into extremist followers requires directed effort and time is only part of an overall comprehension of how it occurs. Similarly, recognizing that radicalization evolves from recruitment and indoctrination does not account for the desire to radicalize in the first place. The subsequent chapters of this thesis aim to use this framework to examine these issues in an attempt to determine how some extremist organizations create the ability to perpetuate while others cannot.

⁴⁸ Ramakrishna, *Indoctrination Processes Within Jemaah Islamiyah*, 219, In-group is very similar to the isolated communities started by the Protestant Fundamentals of 19th century United States.

⁴⁹ Ramakrishna, *Indoctrination Processes Within Jemaah Islamiyah*, 221

⁵⁰ Ramakrishna, *Indoctrination Processes Within Jemaah Islamiyah*, 221

Chapter 3

Case Study: Aum Shinrikyo

Increasingly widespread among ordinary people is the feeling of things going so wrong that only extreme measures can restore virtue and righteousness to society...a visionary guru can seize on such feelings while promising to replace them with equally absolute love and life power.

-- Robert Jay Lifton

Introduction

Aum Shinrikyo is the quintessential example of an extremist organization created from and guided by the ideology of a single central figure. The 1995 terrorist attacks on the Tokyo subway system were the result of one man's—Shoko Asahara's—apocalyptic vision of the future. It is essential to understand that any discussion concerning Aum Shinrikyo starts and ends with Asahara. Simply put, as Asahara went, so too did his organization—Aum Shinrikyo—and its followers. Over the course of almost three decades, Aum Shinrikyo served as a mirror to Asahara's growing extremist ideologies. As the supreme leader of Aum, Asahara maintained universal control over his organization's followers, projecting his wants and desires upon every action of the cult. By filling the societal void between young and old Japan, Asahara established himself as the charismatic and divine leader of over 50,000 willing followers. Among them were some of the most technically gifted minds of Japanese society. He would use these minds to formulate and execute plots involving kidnapping, torture, and murder. It was also his orders that would result in one of the largest terrorist attacks ever on Japanese soil. However, Asahara's arrest and removal as supreme leader of Aum brought about an almost instantaneous mass exodus of followers, the collapse of Asahara's apocalyptic religion and the total organizational restructure of Aum Shinrikyo.¹ Why did this happen?

¹ In February 2000, Aum Shinrikyo officially changed its name to Aleph. Accordingly, Aleph removed the term Aum Shinrikyo from its bi-laws. As well, Aleph stipulated that any mention of Asahara could only reference his position for the purposes of meditation. More detailed information about Aleph is found at its website: <http://english.aleph.to/pr/01.html>.

Aum Shinrikyo, as an organization, exhibited many of the characteristics akin to those of other widely accepted extremist groups. Like *al-Qaeda*, Aum Shinrikyo based its shared belief system on recognized religious foundations.² Loosely basing his theology around the Hindu religion's God of destruction, Shoko Asahara blended New Age Eastern religion and mysticism with the Judeo-Christian version of Armageddon, to invent *Harumagedon*.³ Asahara believed his religion would provide the answer to Japan's future through its ability to provide his followers sanctuary from the apocalyptic fall of Japan. Although similar to the concept of millenarianism, Asahara's ideology did not bind itself to a specific day and time. Rather, Asahara often referenced a scenario where someone or something would instigate the *Harumagedon* he preached.⁴ The precedent for Japanese belief in millennialism goes as far back as the Yamato period of Japanese history. During the sixth century, in particular, "Buddhism and Japanese folklore provided a powerful catalyst for the inculcation of millennial faith into the traditional Japanese societal cognitive map."⁵ Millenarianism remains relevant to most theologies and faiths today. Asahara would use his own version of millenarianism to fashion a cult in his own image, believing his own ideology about the future.

Based on this Armageddon scenario, Asahara and his followers preached this faith and began the targeted recruiting and intensive indoctrination of both current members and new recruits. This allowed him to nurture his cult of "doomsdayers." The isolated nature of Aum's compounds and purification rituals also provided fertile soil for Asahara to project his increasingly paranoid radical feelings onto his followers.⁶ In a broad sense, two aspects of the fundamental/extremism framework explain the relationship between Shoko Asahara and Aum. The first aspect examines how specialized recruitment and

² *al-Qaeda* is discussed in detail in Chapters Three and Four.

³ David E. Kaplan, David E., and Andrew Marshall. *The Cult at the End of the World*. (New York: Crown Publishers 1996) 16.

⁴ Millenarianism (also millenarism) is the belief by a religious, social, or political group or movement in a coming major transformation of society. Millennialism is one type of millenarianism based on a one-thousand-year cycle. It is important to recognize that many different religions practice millenarianism. One example of this belief is Christian faith, which predicts the Second Coming of its prophet and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth. According to prophecies in the Book of Daniel and the Revelation of John, this kingdom of God on Earth will last a thousand years (a *millennium*).

⁵ James F. Rinehart, *Apocalyptic Faith and Political Violence.: Prophets of Terror* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2006) 50.

⁶ Marc Galanter, and James J.F. Forrest. "Cults, Charismatic Groups, and Social Systems: Understanding the Transformation of Terrorist Recruits." In *The Making of a Terrorist; Volume 2*, by James J.F. Forrest, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 2006), 65.

indoctrination practices can marry with singular traumatic events to set the stage for a divine cult leader's radicalization, followed by the radicalization of his organization. The latter analyzes how removing a self-identified divine leader like Asahara from an overly dependent organization like Aum can severely affect the organization's collective existence.

In order to understand the intimate connection between Shoko Asahara and Aum, this case study begins with a short history of both the man and his cult. This historical snapshot provides the foundation to examine Asahara's innate desire to first lead and then control his cult. The history section also details the selection and segregation processes used by Asahara to fill the ranks of Aum at its isolated mountain compounds. It also illustrated the importance of those processes to Asahara's ability to lead Aum. Next, the case study looks at how Asahara's ability to employ extreme indoctrination practices solidified his position as supreme ruler of Aum. Following this, the case study examines how the combination of Asahara's prophetic epiphany and Aum's failed attempt in the political realm served as the tipping point for the descent of the group into extremism. The final points of discussion for this case study examine the impact of Asahara's exit from Aum and explore how his removal affected the group's extremist mindset. By studying how these factors relate to the idea of extremist momentum, a potential trigger leading a cult regression away from extremism begins to emerge.

Humble Beginnings

Long before Japanese headlines recognized Shoko Asahara as the charismatic leader of Aum, he was born to the world as Chizuo Matsumoto. Afflicted with infantile glaucoma, Chizuo (Asahara) suffered from a disease that would leave him blind in his left eye and with diminished vision in his right. The second youngest of seven children, Chizuo grew up in a tiny house in the rural area of Kyushu, Japan. Chizuo received his primary education through a government run boarding school for the blind. Partial sight and a well-developed physique provided Chizuo with a distinct advantage over his completely blind classmates. Better than average academically, Chizuo was thought by many of his teachers to be full of promise.⁷ However, many of the same instructors also

⁷ D.W. Brackett, *Holy Terror: Armageddon in Tokyo* (New York: Weatherhill Inc. 1996) 59-60

remembered Chizuo as an aggressive bully with a tendency toward violence. In a school darkened by blindness, Asahara used his partial sight to rule the other students. People sought out his favors and some paid to share his precious vision. If a group of students wanted to go off campus to have dinner at a local restaurant, [Chizuo] would guide them, but only if they agreed to pay for his meal.⁸ On other occasions, Chizuo's bully tactics only increased anger, leading him to threaten violence against both teachers and fellow students.⁹ Experiences like these, and others, bolstered Chizuo's aspiration to lead.¹⁰ Such aspirations resulted in Chizuo's decision to run, on multiple occasions, for school leadership positions. He campaigned, albeit it unsuccessfully, for student-body president in elementary, junior high, and senior high school. After each defeat, he became increasing more miserable. Upon asking his classmates, "Why do I always lose," one bold female student replied, "We are afraid of you."¹¹ Angered by these defeats, Chizuo spent the remainder of his time in school as a friendless, arrogant bully.¹² However, the fear of future political failure would not deter Chizuo. As the leader of Aum, such a political disaster provides one potential catalyst, which led to his final incarnation as a terror mastermind.

Following graduation, Chizuo gained training as an acupuncturist, but he never let go of his ultimate aspiration to be Japan's prime minister.¹³ Upon completion of his training, he owned and operated a thriving acupuncture/Chinese herbal remedy business. However, failures on the Tokyo University entrance exam and the addition of a new wife and baby created a personal crisis for Chizuo.¹⁴ For solace and direction, he turned to ancient meditative system of yoga, which was taught at a local organization called *Agon*

⁸ James Walsh and Edward W. Desmond, "Shoko Asahara: The Making of a Messiah." *Time Magazine*, April 3, 1995, 1

⁹ Kaplan and Marshall, *Cult at the End of the World*, 8 Kaplan recounts two specific instances of Asahara's violent nature. The first instance occurred when Asahara told a teacher "I will shoot you to death." The second instance involved Asahara threatening to set the dorm on fire.

¹⁰ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 8

¹¹ Brackett, *Holy Terror*, 61

¹² Brackett, *Holy Terror*, 60

¹³ United States Senate, One Hundred Fourth Congress. *United States Congressional Subcommittee on Governmental Affairs—Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction*. United States Congressional Subcommittee on Governmental Affairs—Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1995) 56

¹⁴ Ian Reader, *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan: The Case of Aum Shinrikyo* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 2000) 44-45; Brackett 1996, 61-62 Tokyo University is widely considered the recruiting ground for Japan's elite professionals, including many former prime ministers.

Shu. Chizuo hoped the combination of yoga and traditional Chinese medicine would provide a fix for his personal issues.¹⁵ Based on the teachings of the Hindu *kundalini* and Chinese Taoist yoga, Chizuo immediately took to the concepts of meditation. Although never fulfilled by the teachings of *Agon Shu*, they provided Chizuo with a model by which to create his own cult. It also provided a cocktail of fundamentalism and fantasy Asahara needed to draw in his would-be followers.¹⁶

A Guru Builds a Cult

Chizuo used meditative yoga as the medium through which to reach his prospective followers. He gained much of his early meditative education from *Agon Shu* but, after serving a twenty-day jail term for peddling the organization's fake Chinese cures, he left blaming the organization for his legal woes. He took with him approximately fifteen members and formed Aum Inc., a yoga club in Tokyo's Shibuya district. Early members recall visits to the club "as a fun gathering, without a religious atmosphere."¹⁷ However, everything changed following Chizuo's return from a 1987 visit to Dharmasala, India. There he met with the Dalai Lama, afterwards claiming the leading Buddhist told him that he was to bring the faith back to Japan. Although the Dalai Lama later denied ever making such a request, Chizuo hurried back to Japan to begin a quest bolstered by his interpretation of the encounter. At Chizuo's direction, Aum Inc. became Aum Shinrikyo, and with the group's new name came the new goal of religious victory.¹⁸

With the advent of Aum, everything changed. Chizuo began telling students that cash donations would help their spiritual development. He asked them to hand out Aum leaflets, buy his books, and bring new people to meetings. As well, students were to call him by his new title—*sonshi*, the Japanese word for "guru."¹⁹ Gone were fun-filled yoga gatherings. Chizuo replaced these social assemblies with religiously focused training sessions where Chizuo emphasized recruitment of new members, total acceptance of Aum way, and the commitment of members to separate them from the evil that lay outside of boundaries of Aum's teachings. Though some members left Aum during this

¹⁵ Brackett, *Holy Terror* 62

¹⁶ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 11

¹⁷ Brackett, *Holy Terror* 65

¹⁸ Aum Shinrikyo is Japanese meaning Aum Supreme Truth.

¹⁹ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 15.

conversion, many more stayed. Buoyed by an explosive growth of new membership, Chizuo was on his way to building a powerful personality cult, based on his own handcrafted theology.²⁰ One author described how Chizuo developed his theology in the following way: “As if shopping in a vast spiritual supermarket, he pushed his cart through the world’s religions, gathering bits of ritual and dogma to make his own sacred stew.”²¹ He used this stew to feed and develop the religious foundations of Aum, adding willing members as he went.

Framework Integration

Until Chizuo’s return from India, Aum did not fall into the category of a cult or fundamentalist group. As outlined in the introduction, Aum’s actions, although considered eccentric by many people, did not mirror a movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles that fundamentalism suggests. After his return, though, Chizuo used his newfound popularity to change the vision of his organization. Chizuo sought to evolve his yoga group into a religious awakening for Japan. Fully focused on a religious fundamentalist existence, Chizuo began to shape Aum in his image. Two separate spiritual events aided Chizuo in his conversion of Aum and its followers. The first event was a message from God he claimed came to him while meditating near the ocean. He stated that God spoke to him, conveying the message that he [Chizuo] was to lead God’s army.²² The second event Chizuo used to spur his fundamental conversion of Aum was the prognostication by a radical historian claiming that an apocalypse would occur at the end of the century, with the surviving race’s leader emerging from Japan.²³ These two events combined to form what Chizuo would call his epiphany.²⁴ Now intrinsically linked by these two events, Chizuo believed his true calling was to lead God’s army in the struggle to save Japan from the destruction caused by its wicked tendencies. He also believed that such a profound calling demanded a new identity—Shoko Asahara. Gone was Chizuo Matsumoto and everything he represented—the poverty of imposed social status, the stigma of physical disability, and

²⁰Tomokazu Kosuga, "Armageddon Party: Aum Shinrikyo Can't Wait for Nuclear Winter." *Vice*, October 1, 2009, 1-41-2

²¹ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the end of the World*, 15

²² Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 12.

²³ Jessica Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists* (Cambridge: The First harvard University Press 1999) 66. Kaplan and Marshall also reference Asahara’s fateful meeting with a radical historian.

²⁴ Brackett, *Holy Terror*, 66

most importantly, the perception of failure. To complete his transformation, Chizuo needed to surround himself with willing and disenfranchised recruits who possessed technical abilities.

Recruitment

In order to understand why Asahara was so successful in his recruitment for Aum, it is important to look first at the social climate of Japan at the time. In a broad sense, a gulf separated the old and new generations of the Japanese population. Asahara targeted specifically the disenfranchised portion of Japanese young adults.²⁵ As mentioned, the majority of recruits to Aum were relatively young, ranging in age from their mid-twenties to early thirties.²⁶ They had a vastly different mindset from the older generations of Japan, which espoused a driven and dedicated work ethic as identification with success. So ingrained was the older generation's obsession with excessive work that they created a term that characterized death resulting from overwork—*karoshi*. However, this work ethic did not define Japan's Generation X.²⁷ These young men and women were Japan's "fun generation" and they had quite different values from their hardworking parents and grandparents.²⁸ Buoyed by quick wealth resulting economic booms industries like computers, electronics, and finance, Gen X did not associate the concepts of hard work for the betterment of the company as a driving motivator.

This difference in work ethic became one of the foundational differences between the post-Second World War and Gen X generations of Japan. Rather than confront issues head-on, most Gen Xers chose to escape the social pressures placed on them by parents and grandparents in favor of virtual existences. Fanciful mediums that portrayed an alternate reality steeped in fantasy, violence, battle, sex, and death served as a backdrop

²⁵ Many of the techniques employed by Asahara to recruit member are grounded in the *empiricism* school of psychological thought, which espouses the belief that that the brain has inborn capabilities for learning from the environment but does not contain content such as innate beliefs. The alternative interpretation of the human psychology believes that certain skills or abilities are "native" or hardwired into the brain at birth. Experts refer to this school of thought as *nativism*. Many scholars disagree on the impact that the will of person can have on their recruitment. Famous proponents of nativism include Jerry Fodor, Noam Chomsky, and Steven Pinker while John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume wrote from an empiricist perspective.

²⁶ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 27.

²⁷ Wikipedia, Generation X, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation_X, Photographer Robert Capa originally coined the term Generation X in the mid 1950s. Generation X includes the birth dates between 1961 and 1986, as defined by William Strauss and Neil Howe in their 1991 book entitled "Generations." Two commonly accepted shortened versions of the term Generation X are Gen X and Gen Xer.

²⁸ Brackett, *Holy Terror*, 71

for a whole generation that grew up among brilliantly animated cartoons. *Anime* and *gekiga* provided an alternative world for Gen X.²⁹ It allowed young adults to escape from the academic/business related pressures of daily life and from the social judgments levied upon them by the survivors of the war. This mentality of dissatisfaction and a desire to escape meshed perfectly with the fanatical teachings of Asahara, which promised among other things supernatural powers like telepathy and levitation and a new life.

Asahara used mediums familiar to Generation X individuals in order to convey his message. Under the direction of Asahara, Aum began the publication of *Manga* comics, pamphlets, and lecture transcripts to target the disenfranchised portion of Japanese youth. Beginning with pamphlets, Aum painted the picture of a world teetering on the edge of oblivion. According to *Tomokazu Kosuga*, many of the books, pamphlets, and *Manga* comics [Asahara] and his followers published referenced apocalyptic scenarios. One pamphlet supposedly claimed that by 1989 or 1990 Japan would be completely underwater. Other transcripts and pamphlets revealed, “By the year 1999 China and the Western world would have nuked each other out of existence, leaving Aum to run the show.”³⁰ Subsequent published material touted a plan that would bring happiness to all humanity. Warning of Shiva the Destroyer’s return and the coming apocalypse, Asahara reached out to potential recruits by asking, “Wouldn’t you like to help to build a society based on truth, and help more and more souls to live the life of truth, leading to *gedatsu* and life in a higher world?”³¹ In a single sentence, Asahara had found the weak point in Japan’s new generational culture. His understanding of the disconnected social stratification and religious rigidity between young and old Japan allowed him to provide potential recruits with an escape from what they perceived as a glass ceiling.³² Not only did Asahara’s question infer a society without the stressful elements of contemporary Japan, it more importantly targeted the fantasy-based mentality of young Japan by placing them in the position of “hero” in a cosmic struggle against evil. It spoke to the individual in search of something greater than what they were.

²⁹ *Gekiga* are ultra-violent Japanese book-length comics drawn with realistic pictures and dramatic narratives, filled with graphic depictions of rape, murder, and a decadent, retrograde future. *Anime* is the lesser violent predecessor of this genre.

³⁰ Kosuga, *Armageddon Party*, 1.

³¹ Brackett, *Holy Terror*, 70 *Gedatsu* is Japanese for “total enlightenment.”

³² Japanese youth felt that their opportunities for advancement were limited because of perceived discrimination by the older generation, hence the idea of an economic and social glass ceiling.

Asahara's sales pitch to the young generation continued through seminars and books touting a plan beginning with the transformation of first Japan, and then the entire world, into a state of Shambhala. Asahara often concluded his seminars and pamphlets asserting, "Your participation in this plan will result in great merit and will lead you to a higher world."³³

In order to achieve his vision of Shambhala, Asahara needed to recruit new members. He segregated new recruits into two categories—lay members and true believers.³⁴ Most lay members were young, lesser-educated adults merely seeking to escape the unhappiness of situational problems or chronic distress from everyday life matters. Lay members followed Asahara's meditation and dietary rules while living normal lives as a part of regular society. Asahara expected lay members to follow his rules without question. Although the vast majority of followers fell into the lay member category, Asahara sought greater control over his membership. Asahara envisioned commanding a hierarchical structure capable of replacing the fallen post apocalyptic government of Japan.³⁵ To do this, he identified the most dedicated and fanatical lay members, allowing them to enter and live at his Mt. Fuji compound.³⁶

Indoctrination

Once inside the compound, Asahara began the process of converting lay members. He promised members the ultimate inner space, one that would provide his followers a world that mirrored the imaginative world in which they so desperately desired to exist.³⁷ Asahara offered a world free of the social stratification levied on them by mainstream Japan. However, this was not entirely true. In fact, segregation did exist. With much of it occurring prior to the member arriving at the compound for the first time, he identified some individuals as superior to other common Aum recruits.

Asahara identified many of the well-educated compound residents as more enlightened and trustworthy than the lay members, and he labeled these residents *true*

³³ Brackett, *Holy Terror*, 70 Shambhala is a Buddhist term describing mythical kingdom hidden somewhere in Inner Asia. Whatever its historical basis, Shambhala gradually came to be seen as a Buddhist pure land, a fabulous kingdom whose reality is visionary or spiritual as much as physical or geographic.

³⁴ Neal A. Clinehens, *Aum Shinrikyo and Weapons of Mass Destruction: A Case Study*. Master's Thesis, (Montgomery: Air University 2000) 6

³⁵ United States Senate, Global Proliferation of WMD, 56

³⁶ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the end of the World*, 60-61

³⁷ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the end of the World*, 27

believers. *True believers* differed from lay members in two ways—membership and education. First, unlike lay members whom Aum sought out and recruited from university campuses and social centers around Japan, most true believers sought out Asahara of their own volition. One of the main reasons for this difference in recruitment approaches resulted from the perceived connection true believers held through their own interpretation of his books and seminars. Because of this connection, Asahara did not need to employ many of the techniques used to indoctrinate lay members in order to ensure their unmitigated loyalty. True believers freely followed him onto the Mt. Fuji compound foregoing any attachment to their previous existences. In this way, little active recruiting of these members actually occurred. Second, most true believers held advanced technical or professional degrees. These differences were highly regarded by Asahara, and he rewarded true believers with a degree of respect and deference. The devotion of true believers to Asahara's teachings, coupled with their specific technical prowess, them to communicate Aum's religious goals. It afforded him the capability to utilize true believer talents in his grand plan. His growing fixation on death and apocalyptic weapons led to Asahara's decision to fill the lower echelon positions of Aum leadership with some of the scientists, doctors, and lawyers.³⁸ From these positions, true believers managed the daily operations of compound lay members. Most often, this consisted of training or punishing members.

By commanding the true believers to manage the indoctrination of lay recruits, Asahara further established himself as the sole leader and decision maker for Aum. He accomplished this by providing selected true believers with specified directions used to accomplish a given indoctrination procedure. For instance, Asahara demanded compound members sever friend and family ties, relinquish all monetary possessions to Aum, and commit to a life of servitude. In order to ensure this, Asahara established a checklist aimed at squeezing every dollar out of new recruits. His checklist also established procedures to remove recruits' ability and desire to make outside contact. Starvation, sleep deprivation, torture, and the application of mind-altering drugs were

³⁸ Lifton, *Destroying the World*, 23. As early as 1993, Asahara became fascinated with a vision of an apocalypse growing ever closer in its arrival, starting in 2002 and working towards 2000 and 1999. Asahara's eventually identified the world's end in 1996. Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 84

some of the preferred methods employed by Asahara to achieve acceptance of the Aum life. For instance, some compound members were directed to drink only “holy water” blessed by Asahara. This water constituted tap water stored outside in metal drums where moss and mosquito larvae would often grow.³⁹ Other examples included the ritualistic drinking of Asahara’s blood, bath water, or tea brewed with his beard trimmings. Based solely on the discretion of Asahara, compound members’ diets usually consisted of rotten vegetables and stale bread. However, to demonstrate his authoritative command, Asahara would offer compound members sweet cakes, at random intervals during their indoctrination. Former members would later recount that Asahara explained these actions as the result of his visionary sight, which showed him God’s desire that it be done.⁴⁰ Extremely appreciative of such indulgences, many members readily accepted the explanations as truth. Also prominent during these events were the repetitive recordings of Asahara, which touted the Aum mission and reinforced Asahara’s position as its spiritual leader. Together, these acts encompassed the initial steps of a process designed to remove recruits from their past and to install Asahara as their new, unquestioned leader. The process also sought to entrench Asahara as the supreme leader and spiritual guide of Aum by establishing an unquestioned code based on Asahara’s own ideology.

The rules and processes served as a loyalty test for Asahara’s new followers. Those who disobeyed Asahara’s rules or challenged his control received corrective treatment. The line between training and punishment often blurred within the Aum compound. Hot- and cold-water treatments, hanging from one’s feet for hours, and confinement for days in tiny cell-like rooms without facilities were justified by the need of the disciple to overcome bad karma and to increase their spiritual connection to Asahara. Asahara provided mystical experiences to his followers by having true believers administer illicit drugs like lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD). He also created out of body experiences through member acts of oxygen deprivation.⁴¹ While providing the corrective action he sought to apply, these acts also solidified Asahara’s connection to the true believers. Through these acts, a small group of true believers emerged as the

³⁹ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 61.

⁴⁰ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 61. More information is located at the Cult Awareness website, <http://www.cultawarenessnetwork.org/AUM/04.html>.

⁴¹ United States Senate, Proliferation of WMD, 55; Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the end of the World*, 84

confidants and operational commanders Asahara could count on to step Aum into its final position of militant force capable of completing Aum's divine quest.

Radicalization

Interestingly, it was during this time of fundamental transformation that Asahara's infatuation with an end of the world scenario began to emerge. Asahara's vision for Aum changed from one charged with preventing Armageddon to that of assuring the survival of only a small number of people.⁴² Those worth saving would be only the ones dedicated to him personally and the Aum cause. However, Asahara also believed he was capable of converting all those who he encountered. In order to accomplish this task, Asahara attempted to gain political power and representation for Aum within the Japanese Diet. The additional control and exposure, afforded to the groups and its leader through this political victory, would allow Aum to swell its ranks and advance Asahara's doomsday message.

Aum's drive for political power began during a meeting between Asahara and his inner circle. These discussions concluded that, "religious activities alone would not be enough to advance the sect's plan of salvation."⁴³ Asahara solved this problem by announcing that Aum would field twenty-five candidates, including Asahara himself, during the 1990 election of the lower house of the Japanese parliament. Aum poured over seven million dollars into the promotion of its candidates. The cult leader assured his followers that his ability to prognosticate revealed overwhelming victories for each of Aum's candidates, with the greatest margin of victory afforded to Asahara. However, the cult's platform of apocalyptic preaching and utopian socialism was not consistent with mainstream Japanese values. Nor did Aum's practice of dissolving member ties with friends and family gain favor with voters outside of the compound. The election proved disastrous for Aum in terms of prestige, recruitment, and finances. For Asahara, it was particularly painful because he failed to receive even 100 percent of the eligible Aum voters. In a dark revisit to his days as Chizuo, Asahara again felt the sting of rejection from a group of peers.⁴⁴

⁴² Rinehart, *Apocalyptic Faith*, 99; Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the end of the World*, 76

⁴³ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the end of the World*, 76

⁴⁴ This was the case when Asahara ran on numerous occasions for school president.

In many ways, the election failure provided Asahara with the momentous trigger needed to initiate the apocalyptic scenario he had preached for over a decade. The pain of rejection also fueled his growing psychosis concerning the culture of Japan. Asahara proclaimed Aum's defeat at the polls resulted from government voter fraud. Further, he claimed that the loss confirmed Aum's beliefs about the decrepit state of Japanese society and showed the need for extreme solutions.⁴⁵ Most troubling though was the way with which Aum followers trusted in every word their guru spewed. Publically, Asahara would speak to the sanctity of life. However, secretly, he espoused the doctrine of *Tantra Vajrayana*.⁴⁶ As followers increasingly rallied to Asahara's calls for violence, a cult with both the ideological and technical means to initiate his end of days vision began to emerge.

Soon after the failed election campaign, Asahara ordered his senior followers to begin the cultivation of toxins like *Clostridium Botulinum* and 2-(fluoro-methyl-phosphoryl) oxypropane.⁴⁷ These toxins served as precursors for the chemical weapons Asahara hoped would initiate Armageddon and thus fulfill his own prophecy. One such example of this intent occurred when Asahara ordered several senior followers went to Hokkaido (northern part of Japan) to collect the soil from which to isolate *Clostridium botulinum*. He intended to disseminate the toxin from medium altitude balloons to inflict indiscriminate destruction all around Japan. Aum's purchase of a sheep farm at Banjawarn Station, Australia also provides evidence of Asahara's intentions. At Banjawarn Station, Australian National Police would report, Asahara commissioned his top scientists to synthesize raw materials for the express purpose of Sarin gas development. The resulting toxin proved overwhelming successful, killing twenty-nine test sheep. After this, a female Aum believer would recount, "Tsuchiya turned to me and

⁴⁵ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the end of the World*, 47-48

⁴⁶ Masaaki Sugishima, *Aum Shinrikyo and the Japanese Law on Bioterrorism*, Special Report (GiFu: School of Law, Asahi University, 2003) 180; In Asahara's view, killing people to stop accumulating their bad Karma was a righteous conduct. Aum justified its chemical and biological terrorism through this religious doctrine.

⁴⁷ *Clostridium Botulinum* is a Gram-positive, rod shaped bacterium that produces the neurotoxin Botulin, which causes flaccid muscular paralysis seen in botulism, and is the main paralytic agent in botox. 2-(fluoro-methyl-phosphoryl) oxypropane is a fluorinated phosphonate and is similar in structure and has a similar mechanism of action as some commonly used insecticides, such as Malathion. The common name for this chemical in its military form is Sarin gas. More information on this chemical compound is located at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clostridium_botulinum.

said, 'Killing animals is wrong... [Asahara believes] men have committed more misdeeds than animals. Therefore, this will be tested on men' .”⁴⁸

The Final Event

Very seldom does an individual or group instantaneously leap from fundamentalism to extremism. Shoko Asahara and his cult were not different. In fact, Asahara and Aum crossed into the world of violence and crime well before the now infamous Tokyo Subway sarin gas attacks. As early as 1990, Asahara ordered his cult to engage in criminal activity.⁴⁹ Asahara personally orchestrated the cover up of at least two murders at the Mt Fuji compound as well as ordering the execution of Anti-Aum lawyer Tsutsumi Sakamoto and his family. These crimes resulted from individual challenges to Asahara control and power. However, it was mainstream Japan's rejection of Asahara after the 1990 elections that really ignited Asahara's extremist goals. The Japanese population had denounced Aum's belief system as well as its creator. For Asahara, this was the sign that Armageddon was imminent. These events led to his decision to begin chemical weapons programs, at the Mt. Fuji compound and in Australia, capable of igniting his prophesized apocalyptic war. Over the next six years, Aum would refine both the weapons and the processes by which to employ them, finally resulting in five-coordinated gas attacks inside the Tokyo subway system. By ordering these attacks, Asahara hoped to eliminate the existing political authority within Japan and establish himself as its successor.⁵⁰

Asahara's goal was to paralyze the Japanese state with fear and panic, while signaling the beginning of Aum's rise to power and control of first Japan and then the world. Asahara succeeded in killing 12 individuals, while injuring or victimizing almost 4,200 during the Tokyo subway system attack on March 20, 1995. However, the attack did not earn him or Aum the positions of power he so desperately sought. Instead, Japanese law enforcement arrested Asahara and his cult members as criminals, not prophets. Unable to control his followers from prison, Asahara was unmasked as a single lunatic cult leader bent on greed and power accumulation, not spiritual salvation. The Japanese government seized Aum's personal holdings and ordered its members to leave

⁴⁸ Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 126-134.

⁴⁹ Lifton, *Destroying the World*, 28-29

⁵⁰ United States Senate, Proliferation of WMD, 55; Kaplan and Marshall *Cult at the End of the World*, 1

the compounds that had been their home for almost seven years. Although the criminal trials extended the life of Aum out for years, the hold of Asahara on Aum and on its members vanished. Unable to provide control from prison, Asahara's cult effectively disbanded.⁵¹ To outsiders, Aum appeared to be a singular belief system led by a spiritual guru, but as subsequent trials and investigations revealed, it was an organization led by a brainwashing extremist bent on starting Armageddon at any cost.

The Implications of Asahara and Aum Shinrikyo

Aum is important to the discussion of fundamentalism and extremism because it exemplifies the impact one individual can have on the overall direction of a much larger group. None of the published work used for the creation of this case study gave significant credit for the decisions of Aum to anyone beyond Shoko Asahara. He controlled almost every action undertaken by Aum and its members. In fact, in no instance did individuals selected for a criminal mission ever refuse or second-guess the decision of Asahara. Asahara built upon the growing disenfranchisement of Japan's young adults, providing them with the alternative they sought. He used easy access to universities, cultural centers, and social gathering spots like his yoga centers to find interested individuals. Once "choosing" the Aum way, Asahara locked members away in secluded compounds in order to better control the process of conversion. He intensively indoctrinated members by eliminating the outside world. In its place, Asahara created a world where he was the supreme leader. He introduced his own belief system, using true believers to reinforce the behavioral norms of the group. He closely monitored every compound member, rarely allowing any of them to leave the Mt. Fuji enclave. By doing this, Asahara controlled an alternate reality where he created the need for extreme action in order to avert the Armageddon he routinely preached. With the radicalization of Aum complete, he unleashed his army. However, something went wrong. Following the arrests of Asahara and his inner circle, Aum collapsed. Members forced from the compound eventually reintegrated into society. Aum fortune, amassed through crime and "donations" from its members, were largely exhausted to pay for Asahara's legal defense. Gone were the compounds and yoga centers from across the globe, followed shortly after

⁵¹ Aum eventually became the organization known as Aleph.

by Aum, the cult. What exists today of Aum in no way resembles the extremist cult determined to initiate the end of days.

This case study's ultimately leads to the following conclusion. When, as the case was for Aum, a single individual dictates the values and beliefs of the group, his removal can lead to its collapse. This is an important fact because of the implications it has when states classify and target extremist groups. The two subsequent case studies explore *al-Qaeda* and its leadership. As in this case study, there is evidence of a single supreme leader of the extremist group. Unlike Aum, however, *al-Qaeda* does not appear to be vulnerable to the same means, which led to the former's collapse.

Chapter 4

Case Study: *Al-Qaeda* (1988-2001)

And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you... And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter, and do not fight with them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight with you in it, but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers.

-- *Koran, Chapter 2,
verses 191-192*

Introduction

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks that killed more than 3,000 people made “*al-Qaeda*” a household word. *Al-Qaeda*, which roughly translates to “the base” in Arabic, is not only considered the leading terrorist organization but also serves as inspiration and a rallying cry for Islamic extremists around the world. Attacks on wealthy metropolitan cities like New York, London, and Madrid, as well as in the less-advantaged countries of Sudan, Pakistan, and the Philippines, suggest that *al-Qaeda* has orchestrated terror plots and actual attacks in every continent except Antarctica.¹ The far-reaching impact of *al-Qaeda* is even more impressive when one takes into account that the US government alone has provided the Department of Defense supplemental and annual appropriations totaling over \$808 billion for in for use in military operations supporting the Global War on Terrorism.²

This chapter and the next look at *al-Qaeda*’s emergence and evolution as an international terror organization in order to understand how it is able to persist in the face

¹ Associated Press. “Fox News.” *U.S. Freezes Assets of Al-Qaeda-Linked Charities, Companies*. February 8, 2006. <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,184229,00.html>

² United States Government Accounting Office, *Global War on Terrorism: Reported Obligations for the Department of Defense*. Congressional Committee (GAO-09-449R), Washington D.C.: GPO, 2009. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush announced a Global War on Terrorism, requiring the collective instruments of the entire federal government to counter the threat of terrorism. Ongoing military and diplomatic operations overseas, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, constitute a key part of GWOT. These operations involve a wide variety of activities, such as combating insurgents, training the military forces of other nations, and conducting small-scale reconstruction and humanitarian relief projects.

of such overwhelming international pressure. Specifically, this chapter examines *al-Qaeda*'s development until it launched the September 11 attacks. The framework outlined in Chapter 2 offers a method of assessing how *al-Qaeda* grew from a mujahedeen auxiliary force to global facilitator of terrorism in terms of the recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization of its members. The next chapter picks up the narrative and analysis of *al-Qaeda* following the events of September 11, 2001. Although *al-Qaeda* failed to defend its sanctuary in Afghanistan, many of its key members survived and escaped to reinvent the organization while withstanding major economic offenses against its financial assets as well as assaults on its theological legitimacy from anti-*al-Qaeda* clerics around the world. Experts differ on whether or not what emerged from these struggles actually constitutes an organization, but *al-Qaeda* continues to inspire attacks, publish propaganda, and assist cells and individuals where and when it can. Chapter 5 examines the anatomy of this surviving entity to determine how its ability to recruit, indoctrinate, and radicalize recruits has changed, and whether this has helped or hindered the growth of the movement.

Background history of *al-Qaeda* up to 9/11

By most expert accounts, *al-Qaeda* did not exist prior to an August 11, 1988.³ The term emerged during an August meeting between Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, Osama bin Laden, Abu Hafs, Abu Ubaydah, Abu Hajer, Dr. Fadl, and Wa'el Julaidan in Peshawar, Pakistan.⁴ The purpose of this meeting sought to define the future of the Islamic *jihadist* movement following the *mujahedeen* victory of Soviet forces in Afghanistan.⁵ The question posed at the August 1988 meeting and the answers that followed resulted in the creation of one of the most successful Islamic terror organizations of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. Each man present at the meeting represented a portion of the Middle Eastern Islamic realm. Hoping to

³ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower*, (New York: Random House, 2006), 133. The first official meeting, according to Wright occurred on August 20, 1988. The initial use of the term "*al-Qaeda*" came from the agreement between the men mentioned above that 314 brothers should be trained and ready for *jihad* within six months of the establishment of the group, or training base.

⁴ See Appendix B for detailed biographies of each meeting member.

⁵ A *mujahid* (literally "struggler", "justice-fighter" or "freedom-fighter") is a person who is fighting for freedom. The plural is *mujahadeen*. The word is from the same Arabic triliteral as *jihad* ("struggle"). *Mujahadeen* is also transliterated from Arabic as *mujahedin*, *mujahideen*, *mujahedīn*, *mujahidīn*, *mudāhedīn*, *mujaheddīn* and variants.

continue reclaiming Islamic holy land, “Azzam sought to train brigades of Hamas fighters in Afghanistan, who would then return to carry on the battle against Israel.”⁶ Azzam believed that secularism among the Muslim population was to blame for the religion’s century of decline. In his 1979 fatwa—*Defence of the Muslim Lands*—Azzam specifically referenced the need for all Muslims to rise up and fight heretical occupiers of the Islamic holy land.⁷ Broadly interpreted, Azzam’s claim resembles similar cries of other disenfranchised population sects from around the world. In Azzam’s mind, this “near” enemy posed a significant threat to the future of the Muslim world, by preventing the communication of the fundamentalist Muslim message. This idea also agrees with Qutb’s belief that governments like Egypt were marginalizing Islam in the Muslim world. Azzam believed defeating these near enemies, and the apostate Muslims who supported them, best served the will of Allah in re-establishing the global Islamic Caliphate. However, he also believed that the practice of *jihadi* Islam posed a significant threat to the “Islamic perspective.” The Western understanding of Azzam’s concern instead uses the Arabic word *takfir* to describe the extreme actions taken by its purveyors.⁸

Takfiri Islam—which future *al-Qaeda* Lieutenant Ayman al Zawahiri practiced—builds upon the *Quran*’s call that “whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad) after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers’ way, we shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell—what an evil destination.”⁹ Partially derived from the fundamentalist teachings of Seyyid Qutb, *Takfiri* Muslims believe that war should wage between the followers of Allah and

⁶ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 130

⁷ Abdullah Yusef Azzam, “Defence of the Muslim Lands; The First Obligation After Iman; Biography of Abdullah Azzam and Introduction.” *Religioscope*. January 1, 2002, http://www.religioscope.com/info/doc/jihad/azzam_defence_3_chap1.htm. Azzam derives many of the calls to *jihad* contained in his 1979 fatwa from the writings of Seyyid Qutb and Sheikh Ibn Taymia. The most important of these references the fight against enemies inside the Islamic holy lands. Enemies identified within this struggle became known as the near enemy.

⁸ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 129-131 In Islamic law, *takfir* refers to apostasy in Islam, or the practice of declaring oneself an unbeliever or *kafir*, previously considered Muslim. Some Muslims believe *takfir* (declaring someone a *kafir*) to be a prerogative only afforded to the Prophet—who does that through Divine revelation—or the State which represents the collectivity of the *Ummah* (the whole Muslim community). Typically, orthodox Islamic law requires extremely stringent evidence for such accusations. In many cases, it requires an Islamic court or a religious leader, an *alim*, to pronounce a fatwa (legal judgment) of *takfir* on an individual or group.

⁹ University of Southern California, “Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement.” *Translations of the Qur'an, Surah 4*. January 1, <http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/muslim/quran/004.qmt.html>

all other non-believers. This opposing view of Islam espouses the belief that the only way to achieve holy victory is through the defeat of *Jahiliyyah*, or worldly influences which corrupt individuals and lure them away from the true path, and death to those who engage in its practice.¹⁰ Although *Takfiris* recognize the growing numbers of Muslim non-believers, they choose instead to center their fight against the outside influences on Islam. Most often, this focus falls upon Western civilization and what are perceived to be the two countries responsible for international Zionism and capitalism: Israel and the United States. These enemies, which support or have diplomatic relations with *jahili* Muslim “near” enemy states, earned the moniker of the “far” enemy. At the Peshawar meeting, Hafs, Ubaydah, and Fadl carried the mantle of the *Takfiri* Islam, which Azzam opposed.¹¹ Each of these camps sought to gain the approval and funding of an increasingly influential individual within the movement—Osama bin Laden.

A Saudi by birth, bin Laden came from a large and wealthy family. His father earned his wealth as the owner of a successful construction inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Although an above average student, bin Laden dropped out of school in 1979 to join Azzam’s fight against the Soviets in Afghanistan.¹² Together, in 1984, the two men founded *Maktab al-Khidamat* (MAK), one of the largest fundraising and recruiting organization to support the *mujahedeen* efforts in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation. MAK funneled recruits and money to the Afghan war effort through the eventual Soviet defeat. However, following this victory, philosophical differences emerged between Azzam and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), and in particular its leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. Azzam wanted foreign *jihadists* to remain in Afghanistan and consolidate the victory for the greater Islamic cause. Zawahiri argued against such a move. He believed the best use of the nascent pan-Islamic armed movement would be to unleash it on the entire *jahiliyyah* world, beginning with Egypt.¹³ The handwritten

¹⁰ *Jahiliyyah* is the Islamic concept of “ignorance of divine guidance” or “the state of ignorance of the guidance from God—referring to the condition the Arabs encountered prior to the revelation of the Quran to Muhammad. By extension it means the state of anyone not following Islam and the Quran

¹¹ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 131

¹² Some disagreement among published authors exists regarding whether bin Laden graduated from university or not. For the purposes of this paper, bin Laden’s formal education is less important than his personal religious upbringing.

¹³ Charles Allen, *God’s terrorists: the Wahhabi cult and the hidden roots of modern Jihad* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press 2006) 284-285 these arguments became the basis for the Islamic debate over the near and far enemy.

transcripts of the August 11, 1988 meeting detail the decision of bin Laden to side with Zawahiri and the far enemy cause over Azzam and his insistence to first defeat Islam's near enemies.¹⁴ Following this decision, Azzam continued to interact with bin Laden and his followers, although his influence on *Al-Qaeda* and the greater campaign of *jihad* would continue to wane until his death in late 1989. Azzam's assassination by car bomb, which bin Laden was suspected of ordering, cleared the way for bin Laden and Zawahiri to combine the remaining members of MAK and EIJ into an organization, which they labeled *al-Qaeda*.

More Radicalization than Recruitment

Unlike Aum Shinrikyo, *al-Qaeda* did little active recruiting during its early years. The *jihad* against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan served as both magnet and training ground for Arabs and other Muslims with little need for cajoling or convincing. The reputation that bin Laden increasingly had through his support and training activities in MAK more than adequately served to draw recruits and like-minded jihadists to him. Although born into a wealthy family, bin Laden chose to live a Spartan life, often residing in primitive accommodations even when a more comfortable existence was available.¹⁵ This grew his charismatic persona into one admired by those seeking a wage *jihad*. Coupled with the establishment of bin Laden's own jihadi credentials, *al-Qaeda* established a recruiting base that did not require an active recruitment effort to sustain.¹⁶ In fact, little evidence exists of any concerted *al-Qaeda* drive for membership from its creation in 1988 until the September 11, 2001 attacks. Recruits sought out *al-Qaeda*, not the other way around.

¹⁴ United States District Court; Northern District of Illinois. *United States of America v. Enaam M. Aanaout*. District Court Proceedings (Chicago: United States Government, 2003) 28-38; Although the Tareek Osama documents do not specifically state bin Laden's acceptance of Zawahiri over Azzam, part 23 includes a handwritten organizational chart showing bin Laden as the head of the organization. The document also shows Azzam holding a lesser position within the organization.

¹⁵ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 228-229, Omar Bin Laden, *Omar Bin Laden Speaks Out*, interview by Guy Lawson. (March 31, 2010), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/7528897/Omar-bin-Laden-speaks-out.html>.

Bin Laden chose a dilapidated former Soviet collective farm over the more comfortable options. Omar bin Laden describes the Tora Bora compound as nothing more than collection of abandoned shacks without electricity and very few "creature" comforts.

¹⁶ Bin Laden established his *jihadi* credentials through battles such as the so-called "Battle of the Caves" against Soviet Spetsnaz, in which he was allegedly wounded in the foot. The documentation of bin Laden's efforts during this battle solidified his image as a fighter and drew a parallel to the early trials and tribulations of the Prophet Mohammad.

There were differences between the men who fought with bin Laden during the Soviet conflict and those who joined him for the global *jihad* against the West. The men who arrived at camps like Osama bin Laden's *Maasada*—the Lion's Den—during the late 1980s were very different from the successors of the Soviet/Afghan war.¹⁷ Lawrence Wright detailed these differences writing that the old generation of recruits came “from the middle or upper class, nearly all of them from intact families.” Wright continued saying that they were “largely college-educated, with a strong bias toward natural sciences and engineering.”¹⁸ Most received their degrees from western-styled institutions. These men were professionals who travelled to Afghanistan with their families in tow. Most men spoke two or more languages with minimal religious convictions prior to arriving at *al-Qaeda*'s camps.¹⁹ This description was a stark contrast to recruits who arrived in the years following the 1989 Soviet retreat from Afghanistan. These new *jihadists*, as Wright states, were young, single men, many with criminal backgrounds and skills in and experience with forgery, fraud, or drug trafficking.²⁰ Although many had received some college education, very few completed their course of study. Moreover, where most of the old generation hailed from the Islamic belt of Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula, the new recruits were from sources of a more diverse origin. Recruits came from over 20 different countries, including Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Somalia, Russia, and even the United States. Many recruits knew of the *mujahadeen*. Nevertheless, most recruits converged on the *al-Qaeda* camps seeking the chance to start a *jihad* in their own country, not to support Afghanistan's own internal struggles.

Wright listed one more difference between the new and old order *jihad* recruits—the new recruits were almost entirely Sunni.²¹ Sunni Islam followers make up over 85 percent of the entire population of 1.2 billion Muslims.²² Although bin Laden is an ex-

¹⁷ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 301.

¹⁸ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 301. Other authors also discuss the differences in recruits as *al-Qaeda* evolved following its creation. For more information on this idea, authors like Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda*, and Abdel Atwan, *The Secret History of Al Qaeda*, are two good sources.

¹⁹ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 301.

²⁰ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 301.

²¹ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 301. This is an important factor in the decision of *al-Qaeda*'s entrance into Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom, but is beyond the scope of this thesis.

²² John L. Esposito, *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 306.

patriot of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, he acknowledges not only his Sunni faith but also his ties to the Kingdom's unique and fundamental interpretation of Islam known as Wahabbism. At its essence, Wahabbism is the pursuit (often violent in nature) to purify Islam of *bidah*—innovations in Islam. The literalist Wahhabi interpretations of Ibn Taymiyya meshed well with the teachings of bin Laden and the ideology of *al-Qaeda* and provided bin Laden with a cultural connection to a vast pool of potential recruits.²³ Many of the individuals who sought out the organization and the training it provided did so because of friendship or kinship ties to existing *al-Qaeda* members. The recruits did not wish simply to join *al-Qaeda* in going to Afghanistan. During the organization's early years, Wright argues that recruits had the immediate goal of preparing themselves for combat in order to return to their homelands to fight for the establishment of Islamist governments, which would impose Shariah law.²⁴ *Al-Qaeda's* religious training, at times conducted by bin Laden himself, did two things. It elevated his stature among recruits and sharpened the deep religious convictions these men held. The rationalization of dying alongside a brother for the greater cause cemented one's mission upon returning home.

The mindset of self-sacrifice for a more noble cause fit perfectly into the worldview that *al-Qaeda* used to indoctrinate its recruits during their training. Richard Bernstein detailed this worldview in his 2002 book entitled *Out of the Blue: The Story of September 11, 2001*. In particular, he identified three utopian goals for *al-Qaeda*:

1. Establishing the rule of God on Earth;
2. Attaining martyrdom in the cause of God;
3. Purification of the ranks of Islam from the elements of depravity.²⁵

Whether the training consisted of physical or mental exertion, these three pillars tied the effort back to the desire of *al-Qaeda's* leaders to cleanse the world of *Jahiliyyah*.

To prepare recruits for the struggles ahead bin Laden established a three-phased training program for all who travelled to the *al-Qaeda* training camps seeking to join the *jihad*. The bin Laden led training camps provided the majority of *jihadist* recruits with

²³ Allen, *God's Terrorists*, 42-48.

²⁴ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 301.

²⁵ Richard Bernstein, *Out of the Blue: The Story of September 11, 2001* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC 2002) 86.

the basic training needed to supplement the *Taliban* fight against the Northern Alliance or to return home and to conduct *jihad* against their respective country's government in order to establish an Islamic government in the name of Allah.²⁶ Recruits received exhaustive physical as well as weapons and hand-to-hand combat training. The initial phase—the basic training camp—usually lasted fifteen days. The days were grueling and long with little time given to sleep. Following the initial phase, recruits spent approximately forty-five days learning the aforementioned weapons and advanced combat skills training.

These classes also taught an abhorrence of the mortal sins of the world. Sins were split into a love of the physical world and a hatred of dying that this love created. The Islamic indoctrination served to strengthen the growing religious fervor many recruits held. As well, the “advanced training” began to put a face upon what bin Laden viewed as the primary enemy. Wright notes that during this phase the targets usually depicted US troops and equipment.²⁷ Wright also references handwritten notes discovered from an *al-Qaeda* recruit, which listed the “enemies of Islam.” The list included heretics, Shiites, America, and Israel. The dislocated nature of the Afghani training camps allowed bin Laden the freedom to implement his radical ideology without fear of interruption.

During this time, the *jihadist* character of the some recruits would begin to surface. Bin Laden began to identify and select recruits with particular talents, abilities, and ways of thought to enter into *al-Qaeda's* global *jihad*. *Al-Qaeda's* three precisely stated goals appealed to recruits with extremist ideals who sought a purified Islamic caliphate. In many cases, the opportunity to die for the cause also appealed to a fair number of recruits.²⁸ It was this selectively identified and more elite group, which formed a separate tier of *al-Qaeda*. Members of this group received additional specialized training in terrorist techniques. As *al-Qaeda's* extremist ideology began to spread, more individuals began to self-identify with martyrdom aspects of the group's *jihad*. The cell which committed the (9/11) attacks and American-born *al-Qaeda* member Adam Yahye Gadhafi are two such examples of how this process worked.

²⁶ The Northern Alliance was a multi-ethnic opposition group primarily comprised of three non-Pashtun ethnic groups (Tajiks, Uzbeks and the Hazaras) and in the past relied on a core of some 15,000 troops to defend its territories against the predominantly Pashtun Taliban.

²⁷ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 302-303.

²⁸ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 302-303.

The case of the 9/11 Hamburg cell is an example of the nexus that occurs between individuals seeking out *al-Qaeda* for training and bin Laden identifying those recruits who held the most promise to achieve the group's goals. The introduction of Mohammad Atta and three other men to *al-Qaeda* actually came about because of the efforts of a non *al-Qaeda* affiliated third party. Although a recognized supporter of bin Laden, Mohammed Haydar Zammar only knew of *al-Qaeda*. Zammar befriended Atta sometime during 1998 at the *al-Quds* mosque in Hamburg, Germany.²⁹ A radical Islamic, Zammar received training in Afghanistan during 1991, before the formal establishment of *al-Qaeda* training camps. Zammar knew of bin Laden and *al-Qaeda* but little evidence suggests he received any formal training or support from either the man or the organization. Regardless, Zammar recommended the Afghan training camps as a means for Atta and the others to wage *jihad* against the West. Initially seeking to fight in Chechnya, the men instead travelled to Kandahar to train.³⁰ None of the men had met bin Laden or other senior *al-Qaeda* leaders prior to this trip.³¹

The path of Adam Yahiyeh Gadahn, better known as "Azzam the American," followed a similar path as Atta and the other 9/11 bombers. However, Gadahn's journey began after moving to Santa Ana, California following a childhood in the rural areas of Washington state. During this time, Gadahn converted to Islam, citing the need to fill a void in his life.³² In 1998, Gadahn moved to Peshawar, Pakistan. Very little information is available to demonstrate that a concerted recruitment of Gadahn occurred by, or on behalf of *al-Qaeda*. Instead, many like reporter Raffi Khatchadourian recognize that Gadahn's membership resulted from his own efforts to join *al-Qaeda* that included his travel to Pakistan and his willingness to engage in active recruitment of Westerners for *al-Qaeda*. In fact, there is almost no documented coordination or training between Gadahn and either Zawahiri or bin Laden occurs prior to the 2005 "Invitation" video in

²⁹Terry McDermott describes the *al-Quds* Mosque as a facility that adheres to a harsh, uncompromisingly fundamentalist, and resoundingly militant version of Sunni Islam (McDermott 2005) p.2-3.

³⁰ Paul R. Pillar, "Superpower Foreign Policies: A Source for Global Resentment." In *The Making of Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes* v.3, by James J.F. Forrest (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006) 34.

³¹ The Hamburg cell's members included Mohammad Atta, Ramzi Binalshibh, Marwan al Shehhi, and Ziad Jarrah. Unlike the remainder of the hijackers, none of these men hailed from Saudi Arabia.

³² Adam Gadahn, *Becoming Muslim*. University of Southern California, November 1, 1995, <http://web.archive.org/web/20050207095656/http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/newmuslims/yahiye.html>.

which Gadahn recruits Western Muslims. This point along with the example of the Hamburg cell reaffirm the idea that *al-Qaeda* did not actively need to recruit because of its growing reputation.

The ability of *al-Qaeda* to fill its ranks without coercive recruiting efforts allowed bin Laden to continue the second phase of the conversion process—radical religious indoctrination of *al-Qaeda* recruits. This became essential to *al-Qaeda*'s success because of the high likelihood of death during an operation. *Al-Qaeda* had to ensure its soldiers were absolutely committed to the concept of martyrdom. Rohan Gunaranta suggests that creating dedicated extremists was more important to *al-Qaeda* than developing their operational skills:

In the lexicon of “new Terrorism”, religious indoctrination is far more important than battlefield or combat training. The focus of *al-Qaeda*'s training infrastructure was more on religious indoctrination, for instance, most of the terrorists involved in the September 11 attacks did not undergo extensive military training. Rather, their psychological conditioning and willingness to die for Allah were considered operational priorities.³³

The point driven home by Gunaranta is that the majority of terrorists responsible for the 9/11 attacks received very little technical training from *al-Qaeda*. In fact, members of the Hamburg Cell did not discuss techniques to accomplish the airborne terror attacks during their meetings with bin Laden in Afghanistan. Rather, bin Laden met with Atta, in particular, to affirm the *jihadist*'s commitment to the “Planes Operation,” martyrdom, and *al-Qaeda*.³⁴ Bin Laden simply built upon the radical Islamic teachings of Zammar, further strengthening Atta and the other's own misgivings about the West. It was at Zammar's behest, and not bin Laden's, that the men travel to Afghanistan to learn the practice of *jihad*. This illustrates the point that *al-Qaeda* did not actively recruit its members. None of the members of the Hamburg Cell even conceived of the “Planes Operation” prior to arriving at the *al-Qaeda* training camp in Kandahar. It was only after

³³ Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*. New York (Columbia University Press 2002) 73

³⁴ The United States Congress. *The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*. Terrorism report, Washington D.C. the United States of America, 2002, chapter 5, (Gunaratna and Acharya, *The Terrorist Camps of Al Qaeda* 2006) 173

their arrival that bin Laden and other senior members of *al-Qaeda* recognized the men's qualities and agreed upon their unique fit for the plan, including commitment, discipline, initiative, and ability to seek out and obtain the necessary training themselves.³⁵

Similarly, Gadahn did not join *al-Qaeda* with the intentions of becoming its conduit to the Western world. Based on his background, there was no way that Gadahn could have conceived his rise into position as a senior *al-Qaeda* operative or leader of its media committee when he travelled to Pakistan in 1998.³⁶ Even if bin Laden or Zawahiri could have foreseen the benefits of a Gadahn-like representative, neither could have expected the arrival of an American-born recruit willingly defaming the Western world, and in particular the United States, via Internet videos. Only after his arrival did bin Laden and Zawahiri recognize the potential Gadahn provided them and *al-Qaeda*.

Not the Man, but the Legend

What begins to emerge from examples like those above is a pattern of allegiance to the cause and not a single man. *Al-Qaeda's* ability to find willing and able bodies emanated from the combination of its fundamentalist Islamic ideology and growing reputation, not from the charismatic charm of Osama bin Laden or any other *al-Qaeda* senior leader. Steeped in the violent *Quranic* interpretations of Seyyid Qutb, bin Laden used recent Muslim experiences in Afghanistan as an example of the holy struggle facing Islam. His ability to convey the dire situation to the Muslim world certainly helped, but many recruits already experienced much of the oppression that *al-Qaeda* addressed. One such example utilized by *al-Qaeda* was the Soviet-Afghan War during the 1980's.

The *mujahadeen* insurgency against the Soviet-backed communist government of Afghanistan resulted from the attempts to secularize Afghan society, specifically targeting its legal and marriage systems.³⁷ The military-backed effort sought wholesale

³⁵ Marc Sageman, in his book *Understanding Terror Networks*, describes KSM and bin Laden's description of the perfect candidate for the Planes Operation as someone who could solve complex problems and work independently. They further described the recruit to have a Western education and speak perfect English. The Hamburg Cell met every criterion prior to ever meeting with *Al Qaeda*.

³⁶ Raffi Khatchadourian, "Azzam the American." *The New Yorker*, January 22, 2007: http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/01/22/070122fa_fact_khatchadourian?currentPage=all.

³⁷ On April 27, 1978, Marxist supporters initiated a coup of Afghan President Mohammed Daoud Khan. Leaders of the coup executed Khan and most of his family the next day. The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) rapidly gained control and on May 1 and Nur Muhammad Taraki became President. The country was then renamed the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA), installing a communist

changes to both the tribal, but more importantly, the Islamic foundation upon which the Muslim population existed. Specifically, Taraki and the Soviets wanted to uproot and eliminate the feudalistic aspects of Afghan society. Their actions showed a deliberate, callous, and heavy-handed approach to the problem as “an estimated 27,000 political prisoners were executed at *Pul-e-Charkhi* prison, including many senior village mullahs and headmen.”³⁸ Many of the remaining religious leaders fled the country in fear of meeting a similar fate. Consequently, the reaction against the secular reforms was violent leading to open rebellion in large parts of the country.

Bin Laden fought alongside the *mujahadeen* in Afghanistan and understood the religious zeal with which they fought to expel the infidel Soviet aggressors. When bin Laden and Zawahiri won the argument to expand the *jihad* to the far enemy, at the expense of a number of members leaving the group to pursue jihad in their home countries, they understood that *al-Qaeda* would require a different and more dedicated recruit. Marc Sageman referenced this subtle difference in *al-Qaeda* recruits in his discussion of the 9/11 terrorists.³⁹ This difference was also present in the selection of Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri to lead a cell designated to attack a US warship in the Aden harbor during a port of call. Nashiri travelled to *al-Qaeda* camps for training on at least three occasions. Recognizing the abilities of Nashiri, bin Laden asked him to swear a *bayah*, or a personal oath to him, to carry out the global *jihad*. Each time Nashiri declined. It was the recognition of and respect for his religious convictions that led to bin Laden’s eventual enrollment of Nashiri into *al-Qaeda*. Those convictions, coupled with his cousin’s martyrdom death during the 1998 Kenyan embassy bombings, led to Nashiri’s eventual oath to fight in support of bin Laden’s radical Islamic movement.

Unlike Aum, *al-Qaeda* seldom relied on the charisma and appeal of its leader to draw recruits to it. Those who sought out the movement did so without the inducement of active recruiting. Rather, these men were drawn by an organization’s call of action and whose stated goal was the establishment of an Islamic caliphate and the destruction of those who opposed it. Unlike Asahara, bin Laden’s aspiration was not to command

regime that would last until April 1992. More information on the PDPA is located at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s_Democratic_Party_of_Afghanistan.

³⁸ Robert D. Kaplan, *Soldiers of God : With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan* (New York: Vintage Departures, 2001) 115.

³⁹ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 106.

the growing religiously radical army. Rather, under his guidance, *al-Qaeda* had become “A revivalist religious social movement.”⁴⁰ Although international “wanted” posters bore the images of individuals, *al-Qaeda* had galvanized the entirety of its membership under the banner of Islamic extremism. Radical indoctrination of recruits, who freely travelled to *al-Qaeda* camps, progressively intensified their own religious beliefs through teachings rooted in the acceptance of the global *Takfiri jihad* ideology. The common bonds of kinship, friendship, and discipleship all serve as solidifying factors that made *al-Qaeda* into one of the premier terror organizations of the late twentieth century. This chapter determined the indoctrination portion of the Conversion process as the key aspect of *al-Qaeda*’s early survival. The ideological founding of *takfir* Islam bolstered its membership. Understanding this created a potential counter effort to the organization’s growth. Unfortunately, the extremist efforts of pre-9/11 *al-Qaeda* went largely unabated through the decade following its creation. However, this status would change because of *al-Qaeda*’s actions on September 11, 2001. The full weight of international force, resulting from the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks, would permanently affect *al-Qaeda*’s ability exist, much less operate in the same manner as before the 9/11 attacks. With this in mind, the next chapter examines the ability of post-9/11 *al-Qaeda* to continue its global *jihad*.

⁴⁰ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 126

Chapter 5

Case Study: Post-9/11 *al-Qaeda*

The reality was that bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri had become the focus of a loose association of disillusioned Islamist militants who were attracted by the new strategy, but there was no organization. These militants mostly planned their own operations and looked to bin Laden for funding and assistance. He was not their commander.

Adam Curtis

The Fallout from 9/11

Osama bin Laden had no reason to expect the magnitude of the US retaliation against the *Taliban* or *al-Qaeda* because of the terrorist attacks he ordered on September 11, 2001.¹ US responses to previous *al-Qaeda* attacks were anemic, as in the cruise missile attacks on his compound in August of 1998, or were completely absent after the attack on the USS Cole in 2000. US leaders instead instigated the largest Coalition military effort, against bin Laden, since OPERATION DESERT STORM in 1991. This Coalition military effort was OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). It began after President George W. Bush demanded that Mullah Omar and the *Taliban*-led country of Afghanistan turn over bin Laden and his associates immediately after which they failed to do.²

Once the deadline for the handover of Osama bin Laden to US authorities expired, a US-led Coalition entered Afghanistan on October 7, 2001.³ Over a period of three

¹ Usama bin Laden, interview by John Miller. "Usama bin Ladin: 'American Soldiers Are Paper Tigers,'" (December 1, 1998). <http://www.meforum.org/435/usama-bin-ladin-american-soldiers-are-paper-tigers> Bin Laden refers to the way that US led Coalition forces fought in Somalia in 1993. He believes this is indicative of the way US forces will fight in future clashes with *al-Qaeda*.

² George W. Bush, "Transcript of President Bush's address." *CNN*. September 20, 2001 <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/> President Bush outlined five demands to the Taliban. They included delivering to United States authorities all of the leaders of *al-Qaeda* who hide in your land, and releasing all foreign nationals, including American citizens you have unjustly imprisoned, protecting foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. The list also included closing immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, handing over every terrorist and support structure to appropriate authorities, and giving the United States full access to terrorist training camps. Omar's pledge to the Saudi government to provide sanctuary for bin Laden was a major reason for his reluctance to turn bin Laden over to US authorities.

³ Teams from the CIA's Special Activities Division (SAD) were the first forces to enter Afghanistan and begin combat operations. Coalition forces joined with the US Army Special Forces from the 5th Special

months, Coalition forces successfully secured Mazar-i-Sharif, Kabul, and Kandahar. The retreat of Omar and the remaining *Taliban* into the northwest mountains of the Uruzgan Province concluded around December 7, 2001. With the *Taliban* effectively dislodged from Afghanistan, Coalition efforts turned to the mountainous region of Afghanistan known as the *Hindu Kush*. The preponderance of *al-Qaeda* forces, including Osama bin Laden, retreated to the Tora Bora area following the Coalition invasion. Through a combination of luck and deception, bin Laden and other top *al-Qaeda* leaders slipped across the border to Pakistan before Coalition backed tribal forces overran *al-Qaeda* in late December 2001. However, military operations like OEF and others around the world would result in the capture or death of over 25 senior *al-Qaeda* leaders through December 2009.⁴ Included on this list were *al-Qaeda*'s top operational commanders in Afghanistan, Iraq, North Africa, and Somalia. Other senior leaders killed or captured include the mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks, *al-Qaeda*'s operations director, and the third most senior leader in the *al-Qaeda* network. Most of these men served alongside bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri. The men trained in *al-Qaeda* camps and understood the strategic goals the bin Laden sought to achieve. All were trusted agents of both bin Laden and *al-Qaeda*. They acted as facilitators for bin Laden's directions as well as propaganda whips for *al-Qaeda*'s extremist ideology. Because of these losses, bin Laden's ability to command and control *al-Qaeda* operations beyond the mountainous borders of the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) was severely limited.

It was not unreasonable to conclude that the efforts of Coalition forces during the initial phases of the Global War on Terror should have served as the death knell for the *al-Qaeda* terror organization even if bin Laden remained at large. Edward N. Luttwak captured the thoughts of many when he stated, "We now know that only fragments of *al-Qaeda* remain, scattered individuals with some money, skills and weapons who can continue to carry out sporadic attacks but not anything resembling the terrorist offensive that culminated Sept. 11."⁵ However, recent history shows that the picture painted by

Forces Group and other units from the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) to begin the ground invasion. Air Force and Naval air assets along with Army rotary-wing platforms supported as conventional ground forces began to engage Taliban and *al-Qaeda* forces.

⁴ See Appendix C for a detailed list of the *al-Qaeda* leaders killed or captured since 2001.

⁵ Edward N. Luttwak, "The Head of the Al Qaeda Snake Has Been Cut Off." *The Los Angeles Times*. September 11, 2003. <http://articles.latimes.com/2003/sep/11/opinion/oe-luttwak11>

Luttwak and others was simply not true. While *al-Qaeda* has not conducted an attack on US soil on the same size or scale as 9/11, cells affiliated with the movement have successfully conducted terrorist attacks in other countries. For example, analysts present the March 2004 Madrid train attacks and the July 2005 transit system bombings in London, England as two examples of a successfully reconstituted *al-Qaeda*. This chapter examines what *al-Qaeda* has become in the years since September 11, 2001. The chapter also analyzes the role post-9/11 *al-Qaeda* has played, if any, in global extremist events like the Madrid and London attacks.

Until this point, the theoretical fundamental/extremist framework explained why, and under what conditions, a specific terrorist group survived or perished. The framework explained the role that recruits played in the survival of an extremist organization, as well as how the organization's recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization efforts contributed this outcome. However, the post-9/11 form of *al-Qaeda* does not follow this framework. Rather, the vignettes contained below expose the diminished ability of post-9/11 *al-Qaeda* to command and control the continuing Islamic *jihad* against the West.⁶ Because of this fact, *al-Qaeda* became unable to recruit and indoctrinate potentially new members. Although unable to carry the first two tasks of the conversion process, *al-Qaeda* does remain able to radicalize individuals through the ability to carry its message to a global audience.⁷ Specifically, the Madrid train bombings in 2004 illustrate that although *al-Qaeda* was unable to directly recruit and indoctrinate the Muslim men charged with these attacks, *al-Qaeda* propaganda and instruction manuals provided a springboard for their violent acts. The 2005 London transit attacks also support the notion of *al-Qaeda*'s reduced capacity to direct global terror operations but sustained ability to incite and radicalize. Together, these events depict an *al-Qaeda* organization relegated to a symbolic status. Unable to tangibly impact ongoing extremist operations against the West, *al-Qaeda* must now rely on associate groups, cells, or individuals to champion the *al-Qaeda* name in order to remain at the center of violent Islamic thought.

⁶ The author does not contend that the entirety of the Islamic faith is engaged in a *jihad* against the West. Rather, this statement is meant to convey only that portion of Islam that follows the teachings of men like Qutb, al-Siri, bin Laden, and Zawahiri.

⁷ The ability of *al-Qaeda* to broadcast its message via the internet or through sympathetic media outlets, like *al-Jazeera* remain one of its biggest strengths in the global *jihad*.

Madrid: March 11, 2004 Train Bombings (11-M)

On March 11, 2004 Jamal Zougam, Sarhane Ben Abdelmajid Fakheth, Abdennabi Kounjaa, and Asri Rifat Anouar remotely detonated ten homemade bombs. Each bomb was comprised of GOMA 2 ECO explosive, with nails and bolts added to enhance their lethality, and all were detonated by means of a cell phone initiator. The blasts killed 191 people and injured over 1,800 morning commuters.⁸ During the trial of twenty-nine men charged with involvement in the Madrid bombings, Spanish prosecutors feverously worked to connect the attacks to *al-Qaeda*. Rogelio Alonso, of the King Juan Carlos University School on Politics and Terrorism, argued that the investigation and resulting convictions did just that by uncovering a link between the Madrid suspects and the wider world of *al-Qaeda*.⁹ For Alonso, the strings of global *jihad* remained firmly in the grasp of bin Laden, Zawahiri, and *al-Qaeda*. He went so far to say, "The killings on March 11 were carried out by a group of Islamist terrorists, some of whom were closely linked to individuals who were also a part of the *al-Qaeda* network."¹⁰

Not all terrorism analysts agree that there is an identifiable link between the *al-Qaeda* and the 11-M attackers. For example, the concluding remarks of the Spanish prosecutors failed to establish any credible link between the two. Scott Atran, Marc Sageman, and others dismiss the likely connection between the Madrid bombers and *al-Qaeda's* central leadership. Atran, for example, argues that the intent of Rabei Osman Sayed Ahmed was to punish the Spanish people for their acceptance of the Spanish government's role in OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, not provide another step toward the Islamic caliphate.¹¹ Atran, a professor of psychology and public policy at the University of Michigan and a frequent consultant to the US National Security Council and counterterrorism officials, stated, "There isn't the slightest bit of evidence of any

⁸ The identity of who actually initiated the cell phone explosions will remain unknown because three of the men listed committed suicide on April 4, 2004 during a standoff with Spanish police. Evidence recovered from the scene of the apartment where the men took their lives matched the same kind of explosives used in the March 11, 2004 attacks, or "11-M attacks" as they subsequently became known.

⁹ Paul Hamilos, "The worst Islamist attack in European history." *Guardian U.K.*, October 31, 2007. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/oct/31/spain>

¹⁰ Rogelio Alonso, "The Madrid Attacks on March 11. 2004: An Analysis of the Jihadist Threat in Spain and Main Counterterrorist Measures." In *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century v.3*, by James J.F. Forest, (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007) 203.

¹¹ Alonso, "The Madrid Attacks," 202. Numerous articles and publications agree with the description that Sayed was the mastermind of the 11M attacks. SEE FOR EXAMPLE...

operational relationship with *al-Qaeda*. We have been looking at it [relationship between the convicted Madrid bombers and *al-Qaeda*] closely for years. We have been briefed by everybody under the sun and nothing connects them.”¹²

An analysis of information and evidence presented at the Madrid bombing trials also failed to uncover a direct command and control relationship between *al-Qaeda* and the bombers.¹³ Instead, testimony and evidence submitted during the seven-month trial described a scenario where a group of young disenfranchised Muslim men found motivation, not direction from *al-Qaeda*'s extremist ideology. None of the evidence or testimony provided during the trial linked the accused men to training camps in Afghanistan or to any other *al-Qaeda* based training site. Further, no direct communication ever occurred between the bombers and bin Laden.¹⁴ However, both the Spanish government's investigation and the subsequent trial exposed evidence that the Madrid cell actually conceived the terror attack because of information gained from a *jihadist* web site tied to former operational leader of *al-Qaeda in Iraq*, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.¹⁵ The site also provided the extreme Islamic ideological teachings of bin Laden that both incited and goaded the Madrid bombers to carry out their terrorist plot.

Spanish state prosecutor Olga Sanchez agrees with this idea, according to an article written by journalist Elizabeth Nash. Sanchez suggests that the attacks resulted from inspiration obtained from listening to the messages authored by *al-Qaeda* leader Osama bin Laden in October 2003, rather than any specific direction he provided.¹⁶ Nash

¹² Hamilos, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/oct/31/spain>

¹³ Brynjar Lia and Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi Strategic Studies: The Alleged Al Qaida Policy." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. May 3, 2004. <http://www.swedesdock.com/Jihad/> although the article focused on a strategy document for *al-Qaeda* in Iraq, Lia and Hegghammer also reference the lack of a strong connective relationship between *al-Qaeda* and the Madrid bombers. However, they do make the assertion, as does this thesis, that there is a definite "possibility that [*al-Qaeda*] served as ideological inspiration and policy guidance for the terrorist attacks in Madrid."

¹⁴ A complete version of the Madrid Train Bombing trial transcripts is found at <http://www.datadiar.tv/juicio11m>.

¹⁵ Jason Burke, "What role did al-Qaida play?" *Guardian U.K.* October 31, 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/oct/31/whatroleidalqaidaplay> In December 2003, the internet site "Iraqi Jihad, Hopes and Risks" began to circulate a call for "two or three attacks ... to exploit the coming general elections in Spain in March 2004" Brynjar Lia and Thomas Hegghammer, "FFI explains *al-Qaida* document " *Forsvarets forskningsinstitutt*. March 19, 2004, <http://www.mil.no/felles/ffi/start/article.jhtml?articleID=71589>.

¹⁶ Elizabeth Nash, "Madrid bombers 'were inspired by Bin Laden address'." *The Independent World*. November 7, 2006. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/madrid-bombers-were-inspired-by-bin-laden-address-423266.html>.

concludes, "A two-year investigation into the attacks has found no evidence that *al-Qaeda* helped plan, finance or carry out the bombings, or even knew about them in advance."¹⁷ The overwhelming amount international scrutiny thrust upon *al-Qaeda* following the 9/11 attacks, drastically reduced its capacity to directly carry out its extremist operations. Instead, it could only muster the ability to teach Muslim extremists in the hope that they could then carry out *jihad* independent of direct *al-Qaeda* control. This scenario would become *modus operandi* for *al-Qaeda* in the majority of future extremist acts against targets in the West. *Al-Qaeda*'s inability to provide direct management of Islamic extremist operations also surfaced during an investigation into the London transit system bombings in 2005.

London: July 7, 2005 Transit System Bombings (7/7)

During the morning of July 7, 2005, Mohammad Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer, Germaine Lindsay, Hasib Hussain detonated four homemade organic peroxide-based bombs throughout London. Along with taking their own lives, their attacks killed fifty-two other people while injuring over 700 more mass transit riders. Had this attack occurred prior to 9/11, the biography accompanying these terrorists would no doubt weave itself through training camps in Afghanistan or Pakistan. However, this is not the case. In fact, little evidence exists showing any of the London terrorists' connection to jihadi experience or training in one or more regions with Islamic conflict.¹⁸ As well, a pre-9/11 timed attack would yield detailed evidence of the men's direct contact and communication with senior *al-Qaeda* officials, like bin Laden or Zawahiri. Testimony from the subsequent trial of these men would bring to light the planning and logistical support afforded to the *al-Qaeda* operatives through bin Laden's leadership and immense financial holdings. However, none of this corroborating evidence exists. In fact, little evidence does exist to substantiate any of the claims made by Zawahiri that Mohammad

¹⁷ Nash, "Madrid Bombers'were inspired by Bin Laden address'."

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/madrid-bombers-were-inspired-by-bin-laden-address-423266.html>.

¹⁸ The term "regions" represents countries like Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Bosnia where *al-Qaeda* sent *jihadists* during the 1990's and early 2000's.

Sidique Khan was ever an actual part of *al-Qaeda* or that the 7/7 actions 7/7 were controlled by the group.¹⁹

The actual chain of events leading up to the July 7, 2005 attacks paints a vastly different picture of the 7/7 bombing operation.²⁰ In his book entitled *Terrorism as Crime*, Mark Hamm suggests that the 2003 invasion of Iraq may have provided the trigger for Kahn's evolution as an extremist. Others like Mark Hosenball contend that Kahn's transformation had more to do with the radical preaching of Abdullah el-Faisal, an associate of Abu Hamza al-Masri.²¹ Khan's profile and motivation is very different from those *jihadists* who went to Afghanistan to fight. If anything, Khan's motivations are more similar, or almost identical, to those who conducted the Madrid 11-M attacks. Hamm continues, saying that upon returning home from radical religious training trip to Pakistan in July of 2004, Kahn quit his job, turned his back on his wife and infant child, and begin to meet with others who desired to enter into a jihad against the West.²²

Although some writers believe, circumstantially, that the 2004 trips to Pakistan prove links to *al-Qaeda*, little evidence exists connecting either man's training to the group.²³

In addition to differences in the training methods utilized by Khan's cell, the 7/7 attack

¹⁹ Hon Paul Rt. Murphy, *Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005*. Investigation, London: British House of Commons Intelligence and Security Committee, 2006, 12-13; Mohammad Sidique Khan, "We are at war ... I am a soldier." (Information Clearing House. 2005). <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article10079.htm>; Mark Trevelyan, *Militant Islam Monitor*. September 2, 2005. <http://www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/1029>.

²⁰ British House of Commons, *Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London on 7th July 2005*. May 11, 2006. <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/uk/7-july-report.pdf>.

²¹ Abu Hamza al-Masri is a former imam at the Finsbury Park Mosque. Convicted of offenses against the British Terror Act 2000 law, Abu Hamza is currently serving a seven-year jail term. Upon completion of this sentence, the US will extradite Abu Hamza to Oregon for additional terror charges.

²² Mark S. Hamm, *Terrorism as Crime: from Oklahoma City to Al-Qaeda and Beyond*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007) 205.

Somini Sengupta, "3 Bombers Visited Pakistan, Land of Their Roots, in 2004 " *New York Times*, July 19, 2005: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B00EFDC173CF93AA25754C0A9639C8B63&sec=&spon=>.

The article also states that no evidence linked him to contacting or meeting with *al-Qaeda* leaders while he was in Pakistan. However, Khan did train with an *al-Qaeda* affiliate organization in the Philippines during 2001. Shehzad Tanweer and Hasib Hussain travelled to Pakistan during this time, which some analysts believe is noteworthy. Tanweer travelled with Khan, while Hussain travelled separately.

²³ Somini Sengupta, "3 Bombers Visited Pakistan, Land of Their Roots, in 2004 ." *New York Times*, July 19, 2005: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B00EFDC173CF93AA25754C0A9639C8B63&sec=&spon=>. The article states that no evidence links Khan, either by contact or meeting, with *al-Qaeda* leaders while he was in Pakistan. However, both Khan and Tanweer did record their martyrdom videos during this time, which lead some to believe that *al-Qaeda* did have at least a minimal role in their development.

was funded in a manner dissimilar to previous *al-Qaeda* attacks. Lawrence Wright describes how bin Laden would hand money to operatives to finance operations abroad prior to 9/11. For the 7/7 attacks, Khan and the others used a variety of outlets to resource their operation. This included taking overdrafts from personal bank accounts and utilizing proceeds gained from petty criminal acts. One additional source of money allegedly came from funds distributed to a Leeds bookstore and provided by a British Broadcasting Corporation-led charity. This money also allowed the bombers to pay for the equipment used to complete the attacks, but did not result from any overt effort of *al-Qaeda* to fund the operation.²⁴

Hamm credits the plan's conception to a series of meetings attended by Khan and the others at a Leeds bookstore called *Irqa*—the Learning Centre.²⁵ One potential rationale for the attacks was to derail the G-8 summit set to occur in London during July of 2005. By leveraging the increased media coverage of the meetings, Khan and others hoped the attacks would initiate the removal of British troops from Iraq. However, the British Intelligence and Security Committee report on the 7/7 attacks discounts this idea, although Khan and Shehzad Tanweer mention this as a rationale for the attacks in their martyrdom videos.²⁶ Among his reasons, Khan professed his disgust over the atrocities perpetuated against Muslim people around the world by democratically elected governments. However, what is missing from the original video is any mention of *al-Qaeda*, bin Laden, or a desire to establish the Islamic caliphate.²⁷ This is important

²⁴ Wright, *Looming Tower*, 141-142; O. Bin Laden, *bin Laden Speaks Out*, interviewed by Guy Lawson, (March 31, 2010), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/7528897/Omar-bin-Laden-speaks-out.html>, Bin Laden gives two examples of his father physically handing money to *al-Qaeda* members; Michelle Malkin, "How a BBC Charity Funded the 7/7 Bombers." *MichelleMalkin.com*. August 20, 2008. <http://michellemalkin.com/2008/08/20/how-a-bbc-charity-funded-the-77-bombers/> The BBC's Children in Need charity gave £20,000, raised by the general-public, to an Islamic bookshop operated by Tafazal Mohammad. Malkin alleges that Mohammed supplied bombers Mohammed Sidique Khan and Shehzad Tanweer with the funds.

²⁵ Hamm, *Terrorism as Crime*, 205-206.

²⁶ British Intelligence and Security Committee, *Transit Bombings*, 11 Many experts argue that the timing of the G-8 summit was not a primary factor in the selection of July 7th as the date of the attack. Further, the British intelligence report found no real significance for the July 7 at all. Other press accounts suggest that the attacks were designed to create a so-called "fiery cross" in the city center of London, with the sites radiating out from a central point: London King's Cross Station. Journalists speculated that Hussain meant to go north but when his device failed, he purchased a backup battery and detonated (accidentally or on purpose) on the No 30 bus.

²⁷ British Broadcasting Corporation. "Full Transcript of Mohammad Sidique Khan Martyrdom Video." *BBC News*. September 1, 2005. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4206800.stm.

because one of the goals of previously attributed *al-Qaeda* attacks was to advertise its efforts as a means to garner increased support from the Islamic *Ummah*, or population. If Khan or any of the other three men were *al-Qaeda* operatives, it stands to reason that their videotaped “wills” should attribute some credit, or acknowledge the support provided by, *al-Qaeda*.

Both Khan and Tanweer had documented ties to other failed terrorist plots in the United Kingdom in 2004.²⁸ Because of this, Khan’s cell sought to keep a low profile in order to avoid unwanted scrutiny from British police or counterterrorism forces. Some experts and journalists believe that Khan and the others mirrored the approach used by the Madrid bombers in that they remained undetected until acceptable soft targets emerged. Khan’s cell focused on the King’s Crossing Station transit lines while, as mentioned previously, the Madrid bombers targeted the train system. This would make sense because terrorist cells often mimic terror operations that are successful elsewhere. Using knowledge gained from the Islamic chat rooms and jihadist web sites, Khan and the others prepared and stored homemade bombs, until the time arrived to carry out the plan.²⁹ The simplistic manner in which Khan built and employed the bombs suggests that they had a rudimentary understanding of explosives and perhaps received no training at all. This point further supports the lack of a training relationship between Khan’s cell and *al-Qaeda* because, as Wright points out, training in explosives was a key part of the second phase of training at camps like bin Laden’s so-called “lion den.”³⁰

What it all means

The examples of the Madrid and London bombings confirm the diminished ability of Osama bin Laden and *al-Qaeda* to recruit and indoctrinate new recruits. Court testimony and detailed analysis of evidence in both cases prove that those responsible for detonating the 7/7 and 11-M bombs were not part of *al-Qaeda*. The London

²⁸ Reuters, “CHRONOLOGY-The British fertilizer bomb plot.” April 30, 2007, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL2559097320070430> Often referred to as “the Fertilizer Plot,” five British men received convictions for planning the attack. The police effort associated with this event is entitled OPERATION CREVICE. Tanweer and Sidique Khan’s connection resulted from video surveillance of the two in a car with Omar Khyam and his brother, Shujah Mahmood, two of the convicted five men. Khyam was identified as the ringleader of “the Fertilizer Plot” by British intelligence. For additional information, see Reuters chronology cited above.

²⁹ Michael Kenney, *Organizational Learning and Islamic Militancy*, Washington D.C.: US Department of Justice, 2009, 58, <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/226808.pdf>.

³⁰ Wright, *Looming Tower*, p.302-303.

investigations confirmed that none of the four men received any kind of formal training from *al-Qaeda* or Osama bin Laden for use in the execution of their terror acts. In fact, evidence supports the idea that the cells planned and executed the coordinated attacks with minimal funding and with the majority of their vital planning information retrieved via the internet.³¹

What emerges from these studies is a truism that post 9/11 *al-Qaeda*'s impact on the global Islamic *jihad* has evolved from direct oversight of operations to providing ideological support. Cells and groups now engaged in terrorists acts use *al-Qaeda*'s message as a rallying cry rather than a recruiting tool. This allows individuals, cells, and groups to obtain a level of credibility and legitimacy for their acts and extreme intentions even though their goals may not be consistent with those of *al-Qaeda*. The US and Coalition ability to dislocate and continue to disrupt *al-Qaeda* leadership from its sanctuaries in Afghanistan and Pakistan greatly degrade bin Laden's ability to provide operational command and control. The destruction of training camps also left bin Laden without the ability to isolate and indoctrinate prospective jihadists. Prior to 9/11, bin Laden had the luxury of hosting any Muslim seeking to enter into the *jihad* because of the space and autonomy provided by Mullah Omar and his *Taliban* regime. Since November 2001, *al-Qaeda*'s leadership has been contained in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA).

In an attempt to continue more direct leadership, numerous *al-Qaeda* senior leaders like Abu Laith al-Libi and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi were killed as a result of efforts to conduct operations of behalf of *al-Qaeda*. Their deaths and the death or capture of twenty-three other senior *al-Qaeda* leaders led to bin Laden's and Zawahiri's retreat back to and Spartan-like existence in the FATA. These actions effectively ended any *direct* recruitment process, and therefore direct influence, that *al-Qaeda* still claimed. In many cases, prospective recruits were discouraged from travelling to and then turned away from potential training camps for fear of the recruit's presence drawing attention to *al-Qaeda* leaders' locations. Numerous regionally aligned Islamic extremist groups have stepped in to fill the recruitment and indoctrination void created by *al-Qaeda*'s

³¹ Mark Townsend, "Leak reveals official story of London bombings." *Guardian U.K.* April 9, 2006. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2006/apr/09/july7.uksecurity>.

recedence.³² However, most hold only loose affiliation with *al-Qaeda*. Because of this fact, bin Laden lost the ability to direct the Islamic global jihad against the *Jahiliyyah* focused western world. Instead, *al-Qaeda*'s post 9/11 constraints forced it to employ a standoff yet support strategy—the triumph of inspiration over perspiration. Effective financial and military action against bin Laden has made it almost impossible to make contact with or provide funding for potential *al-Qaeda* operatives.³³

This change in strategy is important for two reasons—attribution and survivability. The *al-Qaeda* organization referenced by President George W. Bush in September 20, 2001 address to a joint session of Congress no longer exists.³⁴ Efforts to eradicate *al-Qaeda* from Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries providing it sanctuary have prevented *al-Qaeda*'s ability to train and equip its members in a manner similar to 9/11. In order to remain relevant, *al-Qaeda* has begun to fill the role of ideological inciter rather than operational facilitator. While Coalition efforts have effectively limited *al-Qaeda* input to future terror operations, it has not contained the spread of *al-Qaedaism*. In a Council on Foreign Relations background paper, Bruce Hoffman outlines *al-Qaeda*'s transformation from what was once a hierarchical organization with a large operating budget into an ideological movement. Hoffman continued saying whereas *al-Qaeda* once trained its own operatives and deployed them to carry out attacks, today *al-Qaeda* is just as likely to inspire individuals or small groups to carry out attacks, often with no operational support from the larger organization.³⁵ This presents a huge problem for countries seeking to prosecute *al-Qaeda* legally for terror attacks like Madrid and

³²A detailed list of al-Qaeda sub groups is located at http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/generate_subgroups.php?name=Al-Qaeda.

³³ David S. Cohen, "Press Room: TG-317." *United States Treasury Department*. October 12, 2009. <http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/tg317.htm>

Taken from his speech, "*al-Qaeda's* current financial predicament represents one good measure of the success of these coordinated strategies. In the first six months of this 2009, *al-Qaeda's* leaders made four public appeals for money, including one in June of this year, when an *al-Qaeda* leader announced that a lack of funding was hurting the group's recruitment and training. We assess that *al-Qaeda* is in its weakest financial condition in several years, and that, as a result, its influence is waning."

³⁴ Bush, Congressional Speech, <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/2001>, the portion of President Bush's speech to Congress and the American people that references *al-Qaeda* includes, "Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking, "Who attacked our country?" The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as *al-Qaeda*. Our war on terror begins with *al-Qaeda*, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."

³⁵ Bruce Hoffman, "The Rise of Al Qaedaism." *Council on Foreign Relations*. July 18, 2007. <http://www.cfr.org/publication/11033>.

London. In the Madrid case, state prosecutors were frustrated during the trial of Osman Sayed Ahmed when he was acquitted because of a lack of direct evidence connecting him to the attacks. Prosecutors relied heavily on circumstantial evidence in their case against Osman.

The second important result of *al-Qaeda's* change in strategy deals with survivability. Most extremist groups rely heavily upon recruitment to ensure the group's existence. Without this reliance, *al-Qaeda* now focuses on the perpetuation of its core message rather than its figurehead leaders.³⁶ Drawing from Chapter 4 and Bernstein, *al-Qaeda's* message lists three tenets for success:

1. Establishing the rule of God on Earth;
2. Attaining martyrdom in the cause of God; and,
3. Purification of the ranks of Islam from the elements of depravity³⁷

Unable to engage directly the powers who seek to destroy *al-Qaeda* and its leaders, bin Laden must rely on the ideology to maintain his relevance. Given confinement in the *Hindu Kush* Mountains, while hunted relentlessly by US and Pakistani intelligence and counterterrorism assets, bin Laden and others have the luxury of videotaping messages offering congratulatory praise when terror attacks occur. They can, in effect, pick-and-choose what attacks and efforts covered in the international press are worthy of the *al-Qaeda* name. An example of this phenomenon at work includes the London attacks and subsequent release of Khan's martyrdom video by *al-Qaeda*. While the publically released tape contained both Khan and Zawahiri, experts agree that Zawahiri's inclusion on the tape came separately from Khan. Further, many believe the edited tape was an *al-Qaeda* attempt to remain relevant in current counterterrorism debates.³⁸

Understanding that *al-Qaeda* has evolved is a prerequisite for actions designed to first isolate, and ultimately deny *al-Qaeda* its relevance. The Conversion process framework shows that efforts focused on the current *al-Qaeda's* recruitment and

³⁶ Some debate exists over this point. Those who disagree contend that if the message were the focus for survival then bin Laden and Zawahiri would be willing to die a martyr's death in order to fortify *al-Qaeda's* cause. However, the fact that they choose to hide in the FATA leads many to believe that both men see their own survival as one with the survival of *al-Qaeda*.

³⁷ Richard Bernstein, *Out of the Blue: The Story of September 11, 2001*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2002) 86

³⁸ Global Jihad. *Global Jihad*. April 26, 2007, http://www.globaljihad.net/view_page.asp?id=171; Trevelyan, <http://www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/1029>; Hamm, *Terrorism as Crime*, 207-208.

indoctrination methods are of little utility in achieving its downfall. The time-honored utilization of military and diplomatic power may only have a limited effect upon an ideological wraith.

The conclusion builds upon fundamentalist framework and the analytical findings provided throughout this thesis to recommend a potential intersection from which to engage *al-Qaeda* and other extremist groups.

Conclusion

The religious group Aleph made a fresh start in February 2000 after dissolving Aum Shinrikyo, its predecessor. Reflecting deeply on what its predecessor did in the past, Aleph started to make apologies and compensation to the victims and bereaved families. Since then, from time to time, Aleph has expressed its comments on the past incidents as well as apologies to the victims and bereaved families.

-Fumihiko Joyu

AQ continued its propaganda efforts seeking to inspire support in Muslim populations, undermine Western confidence, and enhance the perception of a powerful worldwide movement... Their use of the Internet for propaganda, recruiting, fundraising and, increasingly, training, has made the Internet a —virtual safe haven. That said, bin Laden and Zawahiri appeared to be in the position of responding to events rather than driving them, particularly in the latter half of 2008.

-US Department of State

Analysis

This thesis examined if human factors could explain how some fundamentalist organizations survive the transition into extremism, while others do not. The underlying goal was to explore ways in which violent extremist organizations might be combated or preempted. Beginning with the theoretical foundation presented in Chapters 1 and 2, counterterrorism strategies must focus on targeting the vital resources of both fundamental and extremist groups—its membership. To that end, a focused investigation on the recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization techniques of Aum Shinrikyo, pre-9/11 *al-Qaeda*, and post-9/11 *al-Qaeda* in Chapters 3-5 uncovered marked differences between the organizations. Although not all-inclusive, this final chapter addresses some of the key differences between them and explains why they are important to the global counterterrorism fight.

Recruitment remains one of the primary goals of any organization. Without a steady stream of members, organizations begin to stagnate, devolve, or die. In the case of Aum Shinrikyo, new members served as a primary funding source for its illicit operations due to Asahara's requirement that his followers relinquish their worldly possessions to the cult. Within the process of recruitment, the concept of disenfranchisement appeared in all three case studies. For Aum, recruits faced a glass ceiling imposed upon them by

the older generations of Japan. Coupled with overwhelming pressure to succeed in academics and business, many individuals of Generation X sought an alternative existence to the one they lived in mainstream Japan. Much of the disenfranchisement of those who joined *al-Qaeda* prior to 9/11 resulted from the idea that Muslims had strayed, in their lifestyle and governance, from the purist interpretation of the *Quran*. Debate continues over the extent to which ideology is the primary motivator, but all recruits of *al-Qaeda* believed at one level or another that the very soul of Islam, as contained in a fundamentalist interpretation of the *Quran*, was in danger of being lost if decisive action was not taken. Post 9/11 *al-Qaeda* further reinforced the idea that the Islamic *Ummah* had fallen into *Jahiliyyah*. However, the main target of their anger, resulting from their disenfranchisement, was the Western world, rather than certain Muslim states and actors. It is important to recognize that the recruiting ability of *al-Qaeda* post-9/11 diminished greatly following Coalition military operations against it in Afghanistan. While this did affect the number of recruits it could create, it did not detract from the emotional conviction with which it operated.

A second important result from the case studies deals with way in which the groups indoctrinated their recruits. Asahara invented an ideology loosely based on a combination of Judeo-Christian and Buddhist/Hindu teachings. Moreover, although steeped in these foundational religions, Asahara made it clear that Aum Shinrikyo and its members followed the teachings that he alone developed. Asahara was the singular guiding principal for Aum. It was his decision that dictated every focus and effort of both the Aum Shinrikyo organization as well as its followers. This point played a huge role in the swift dissolution that befell Aum Shinrikyo following Asahara's arrest and conviction.¹ In contrast to Aum, *al-Qaeda* utilized an indoctrination process grounded in the teachings of Islam. *Al-Qaeda* relied heavily upon the interpretive writings of Seyyid Qutb in order to convey its *Quranic* principles. However, where Asahara took sole credit for his *Harumagedon* ideology, Osama bin Laden followed the path of Qutb in acknowledging *Allah* and his prophet *Mohammad* as the source of *al-Qaeda*'s ideology.

The last criteria explored, radicalization, is tied to an extremist organization's sustainability. Unfortunately, it is the contention of this author that the link between

¹ Aleph, *Liberation of the Soul*, <http://english.aleph.to/pr/index.html>

radicalization and sustainability is illusory, particularly as it was originally outlined in this thesis. Radicalization is, in fact, much more than the final step in the scientific process of extremist development. Stated more simply, radicalization is inherent in everything a terror organization does. Just as members are the vital resource of the organization, radical thought is the vital linkage to extremist action. Without radical ideology, extremist acts of terrorism cannot occur. By creating a framework that segregated recruitment, indoctrination, and radicalization, the intent was to find casual factors within each process that might account for an organization's extremist survival. While, some rationale surfaced with both recruitment and indoctrination, the radicalization process did not yield such fruit. In the case of Aum Shinrikyo, the extreme core of the organization joined with a radical predisposition already established. Individuals like Asahara, Hideo Murai, and Tomomasa Nakagawa all showed radical tendencies prior to or immediately following membership in Aum. Consequently, Asahara relied more on these individuals rather than seek out willing participants for the common followership. Therefore, the radicalization techniques of Aum had little impact on the preponderance of its followers. In fact, much of the demonstrative success of Asahara in managing control of his followers was through his extensive indoctrination process.

Al-Qaeda took a very different approach to radicalization than did Aum. Although *al-Qaeda* did individually select recruits for additional training, it did not shelter any of its members from the organization's radical ideology. Using madrasas, mosques, and the internet, *al-Qaeda* championed its *Quranic*-based extremism seeking to communicate its message to the broadest possible audience as far as it could reach. Unlike Asahara, which only spoke of violence and aggression to his inner core, Osama bin Laden exposed all of his followers of the duty, necessity, and justice of *jihad*. In separate *fatwas*, bin Laden called all Muslims to conduct armed struggle, or *jihad*, against the West, the United States, Israel, and any states that supported them. By calling for *jihad*, bin Laden essentially promoted the use of violence as an acceptable measure of resistance to the enemy he listed. Although debated amongst Islamic and terror experts alike, all agree that the radical interpretation used by bin Laden to propose a Western-focused *jihad* relies almost exclusively on violence and terrorism.

Concluding Thoughts

The conceptual framework described in this thesis has merit in the discussion of why extremist groups survive or fail. Understanding how fundamental/extremist groups recruit and indoctrinate its members explains much about the core belief system of that organization. As well, understanding the radical foundations of an extremist organization can shed light as to potential vulnerabilities. All three cases lead to the understanding that counterterrorism strategies must first and foremost focus on an extremist organization's membership—its leaders and their followers. The case studies also suggest that there are two primary approaches to an extremist group's membership: decapitation or subversion.

In the case of Aum Shinrikyo, recruitment, indoctrination and radicalization methods lead to ardent followership. However, Aum's ideology concentrated on the beliefs of a single, omnipotent figure. As a result, Japanese police forces targeted Asahara and his inner circle as a way to decapitate Aum's leadership, albeit only after it had committed the Tokyo subway attack. Because Asahara was both Aum's physical and ideological leader, and he created and continued to shape its beliefs, his removal crippled the group. In this case, the decapitation of Aum led to its collapse and demise. Such cases are rare, but they offer an opportunity to quickly and efficiently deal with such extremist groups. Deprived of their leader, such groups can revert to their fundamentalist beliefs as evidenced of the shift from Aum to the benign Aleph. In contrast, the case studies of *al-Qaeda* before and after 9/11 demonstrate that decapitation not only may be unproductive, but also may cause extremist organizations to mutate into something much more difficult to combat.

Neither Osama Bin Laden nor Ayman al-Zawahiri were so personally linked to the seminal teachings of the *Quran* that their removal would have had a significant impact on the extremist ideology and message of *al-Qaeda*. What bin Laden and al-Zawahiri provided to the group was a rationale, set of grievances, and rallying point for similarly minded militant Islamic extremists drawn to the *jihadist* call for action by Seyyid Qutb. What *al-Qaeda* provided, prior to 9/11, was training, indoctrination, and further radicalization for a generation of Muslim *jihadists* based on well-established and prevalent extremist beliefs. Despite the death of over twenty-five senior *al-Qaeda*

leaders since 9/11, the group has remained not only resilient but acted as a rallying point and ideological cheerleader for a new generation of extremists. This is because of the manner of al-Qaeda's establishment. Al-Qaeda exists, not from the beliefs molded and shaped by one individual, but because of an overarching and appealing religious ideology—militant Islam and its call for action. It is important that counterterrorism planners understand that decapitation strategies cannot work against a group like *al-Qaeda*. In such cases, targeting the extremist leadership is fruitless and subverting its followers is necessary.

Because not every extremist group member is capable of reconciliation, the first step of subversion must identify which members are. Subversion requires targeting the extremist group at its lowest level. Stated another way, subversion seeks to undo the indoctrination received by extremist members during the conversion process through economic opportunities and education. Much debate exists on the most effective way to accomplish this task. This conclusion will not explore the vast range of potential options to turn individuals, as this is the subject for further research. Instead this conclusion focuses on the requirement to subvert the extremist organization's core—those who now conduct the recruitment as well as the indoctrination. One example from recent news is Anwar al-Awlaki, a Yemeni citizen born in the U.S., who is suspected of playing a key role in indoctrinating both the Fort Hood shooter (Nidal Hasan) and the Christmas bomber (Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab). Beyond the individual level, and looking more broadly at the phenomenon of militant Islamic extremism, the education of non-members will also affect the extremist organization by reducing its potential recruiting pool. Together, the subversion of extremist members and education of and economic opportunities for potential recruits is the only effective means to target an extremist organization whose ideological center of gravity is not an individual.

Unfortunately, as is the case with the larger problem of terrorism, the conversion framework cannot provide the final answer to the defeat of extremism. Any US counterterrorism policy should focus on targeting extremist group members, and more importantly its indoctrination and training programs, which are vital to the organization's survival. The 2008 US Counterterrorism Country Report for Iraq acknowledges this fact. It reported that al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) experienced significant defections, lost key

mobilization areas, and suffered disruption of support infrastructure and funding because of U.S. and Iraqi initiatives to cooperate with tribal and local leaders in Iraq and encourage Sunni tribes and local citizens to reject AQI and its extremist ideology.² The net effect of these initiatives forced AQI to change its recruiting and indoctrination priorities, from local to foreign fighters, further isolating it from the local population.

The fight against violent extremist organizations appears to have no immediate end. As long as ideological differences cannot be mediated through civil discourse or social programs, violence will continue to be a viable option to those who feel disenfranchised or who are looking to escape the prison of their daily existence through acts of religious-inspired violence. Better understanding the roots of extremism, and in particular how fundamentalism changes into extremism, might allow its preemption before the threat becomes dangerous.

² Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Afghanistan Country Report, 1

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APPENDIX A: Listing of Key Members of Shoko Asahara's Inner Circle

Hideo Murai, (36) (deceased)—Minister of Science and Technology—After graduating from the physics department of Osaka University he entered graduate school specializing in physics and started working for Kobe Steel Ltd's research and development department.

Kiyohide Hayakawa (45)—Minister of Construction—Held a master's degree in environmental planning architecture from Osaka University.

Fumihito Joyu (32)—Public Relations Minister—Graduate of Waseda University with a master's degree in artificial intelligence. Was an engineer at the National Space Development Agency before joining the cult.

Yoshinobu Aoyama (35)—Justice Minister—Son of a wealthy family in Osaka. Graduate of Kyoto University Law School and the youngest person to pass the national bar exam.

Masami Tsuchiya (30)—Chief Scientist—Held a master's degree in organic chemistry from Tsukuba University.

Tomomasa Nakagawa (32)—Chief Medical Doctor and personal doctor to Shoko Asahara—Held a medical degree from Kyoto Prefectural College of Medicine. He passed the Japanese national medical exam in 1989.

APPENDIX B: Key Individuals at the 1988 *al-Qaeda* Meeting in Peshawar, Pakistan

Abdullah Azzam—was a highly influential Palestinian Sunni Islamic scholar and theologian, who preached in favor of defensive jihad by Muslims to help the Afghan mujahadeen against the Soviet invaders. He raised funds, recruited, and organized the international Islamic volunteer effort of Afghan Arabs during the 1980s. He emphasized the political ascension of Islamism. He was the teacher and mentor of Osama bin Laden, and persuaded him to come to Afghanistan and help the jihad, though the two differed as to where the next front in global jihad should be after the withdrawal of the Soviets from Afghanistan. He died from a bomb blast on November 24, 1989.

Osama bin Laden—is a member of the prominent Saudi bin Laden family and the founding leader of the terrorist organization *al-Qaeda*, best known for the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States and numerous other mass-casualty attacks against civilian targets. bin Laden is on the American Federal Bureau of Investigation's list of FBI Ten Most Wanted Fugitives.

Abu Hafs—a veteran of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Hafs is a religious scholar and author, who tried to build an advanced religious school called the Institute of Islamic Studies in Kandahar, Afghanistan. According to American authorities, he was also an adviser to Osama bin Laden and was openly opposed to the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Abu Hajer—Born in Syria, Mohammed Loay Bayazid is an American citizen alleged to have been a founding member of *al-Qaeda*, although he has cooperated with American authorities and claims his role in the group is over-stated. In 1988, he allegedly took notes during one of the formative meetings detailing the creation of *al-Qaeda*.

Dr. Fadl—is described as a "major" figure in the global jihad movement. Described one of Ayman Al-Zawahiri's oldest associates, his book *al-'Umda fi I'dad al-'Udda* ("The Essentials of Making Ready [for Jihad]") was used as a jihad manual in early *al-Qaeda* training camps in Afghanistan. He has recently attacked *al-Qaeda* and called for a stop to violent jihad activities both in Western and Muslim countries.

Wa'el Julaidan—he previously established "the Service Office" or Maktab al-Khidamat in Afghanistan, along with bin Laden and Abdullah Yusuf Azzam. Many *al-Qaeda* supporters trained in the Arab military camps set up by Julaidan to support the mujahadeen resistance movement against the Soviet occupation.

APPENDIX C: Major *al-Qaeda* leaders killed or captured since 2001

AFGHANISTAN:

* Mohammed Atef, one of the top leaders of Osama bin Laden's *al-Qaeda* network, was killed in a U.S. air strike in Afghanistan in November 2001.

* Abu Laith al-Libi, one of Osama bin Laden's top lieutenants who commanded militant forces in Afghanistan, was killed in February 2008 in a suspected U.S. missile strike that also killed up to 13 foreign militants.

ALGERIA:

* Algerian troops killed Hareg Zoheir, the deputy chief of *al-Qaeda*'s North Africa wing, along with two other rebels in a gun battle in October 2007.

IRAQ:

* USAF jets killed Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, *al-Qaeda*'s leader in Iraq during air raid in June 2006.

* U.S. forces killed Muhammed Abdullah Abbas al-Issawi, described as a security emir for *al-Qaeda* in Iraq, in April 2007.

* The U.S. military killed Muharib Abdul Latif al-Jubouri, an *al-Qaeda* figure accused of involvement in the kidnapping of American journalist Jill Carroll, in May 2007.

* Police killed Mohammed Yahya al-Rahmani, known as Abu Mussab, and three foreign militants near Samarra in Feb 2008.

* In April 2008, Iraqi authorities captured Nazal Sabar al-Jughaify, also known as Abu al-Jarrah, a senior lieutenant to *al-Qaeda*'s leader in Iraq, Abu Ayyub al-Masri.

PAKISTAN:

* Pakistani forces arrested Saudi-born Palestinian Abu Zubaydah after a shootout in the central Pakistani city of Faisalabad in March 2002. Zubaydah was operations director for *al-Qaeda* and the first high-ranking member arrested.

* Karachi based forces captured Ramzi Binalshibh, a Yemeni national and one-time roommate of Mohamed Atta, suspected ringleader of the Sept. 11 hijackers, in September 2002.

* Security forces arrested Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, *al-Qaeda* number three and alleged mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks, in a raid in Rawalpindi, near Islamabad, in March 2003.

- * Musaad Aruchi, a nephew of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed with a \$1 million bounty on his head, arrested in Karachi in June 2004.
- * Tanzanian Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani arrested in the city of Gujrat in July 2004.
- * Pakistani intelligence agencies and security forces arrested Abu Faraj Farj al-Liby, mastermind of two failed attempts on President Pervez Musharraf's life, in May 2005.
- * Abu Hamza Rabia, an *al-Qaeda* commander ranked the third most senior leader in the network, killed in a tribal region of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan in December 2005.
- * Muhsin Musa Matwalli Atwah (also known as Abdul Rehman), an Egyptian *al-Qaeda* member wanted for involvement in the 1998 bombing of the U.S. embassy in Kenya, was killed by Pakistani forces close to the Afghan border in April 2006.
- * A missile fired by a U.S. drone killed Ilyas Kashmiria, *al-Qaeda* operations chief and two other militant commanders in the volatile North Waziristan region.
- * US drones targeted and killed *al-Qaeda* operative Abu Sulayman Jazairi, an Algerian explosives specialist.

SAUDI ARABIA:

- * Saudi police shot and killed Youssef al-Eiery, the leading *al-Qaeda* militant in Saudi Arabia who was behind the May 2003 suicide bombings in Riyadh, which killed at least 35 people, shortly after the attacks.
- * Saudi security forces would kill several of Eiery's successors, including Khaled Ali Haj, Abdulaziz al-Muqrin and Saleh al-Awfi, over the next two years.

SOMALIA:

- * A U.S. air strike killed Aden Hashi Ayro, who led al Shabaab militants blamed for attacks on government troops and their Ethiopian allies.
- * Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan died during a raid by covert forces in southern Somali town of Barawe.

YEMEN:

- * Yemeni security forces shot dead Yasser al-Homeiqani, an *al-Qaeda* fugitive, in southern Yemen in January 2007.